Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian Summit Opens 11 May

NC1005052296 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The first meeting of the Higher Ministerial Egyptian-Palestinian Joint Committee will open tomorrow [11 May] under the chairmanship of Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas.

Ambassador 'Adil al-Safti, first under secretary of the Foreign Ministry, said the committee, which will meet for two days, will discuss boosting bilateral ties in various spheres and review the development of these ties since the Egyptian-Palestinian agreement was signed in January 1994.

The Palestinian delegation to the committee meetings has arrived in Cairo. These meetings will precede a tripartite summit between President Husni Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan, and Palestinian President 'Arafat in Cairo day after tomorrow, Sunday [12 May]

Inter-Arab: Mubarak, King Husayn, 'Arafat Resume Talks 12 May

NC1205140596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 May (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat resumed their talks this afternoon at a working lunch held by President Mubarak at the presidential office.

The lunch was attended by members of the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Palestinian delegations to the talks.

Inter-Arab: Communique on Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian Summit

NC1205135496 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 12 May 96

["Text" of communique issued at the end of a tripartite Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian summit in Cairo on 12 May 96; read by announcer]

[FBIS Translated Text] The participant leaders reviewed developments in the region with emphasis on various aspects of the peace process. The leaders concluded that, despite recent regrettable bloody incidents in the region, this region's nations are still looking forward to a just and comprehensive peace and they cling to this peace as a firm strategic goal and moral obligation that will put an end to violence, destruction, and suffering.

It is the path toward development, reconstruction, and establishing equitable security and stability for all sides.

Therefore, the leaders call for removing obstacles that still exist on the road to peace and doubling efforts to resume serious negotiations on various tracks as soon as possible. The aim is to maintain the current momentum and confront attempts by the enemies of peace to abort and stop the peace process.

To ensure coordination of Arab stands and consolidate Arab solidarity, and out of concern for boosting joint efforts among the parties concerned in the forthcoming sensitive phase, agreement was reached on a continuous mechanism at the ministerial level for coordination and follow-up. This mechanism should guarantee the continuation of cooperation, achieve harmony, and enhance solidarity among the three sides, with emphasis on the continuation of coordination and solidarity with other Arab parties concerned.

The three leaders assert that the desired peace is genuine peace based on respecting mutual rights and duties, implementing the principle of land for peace, withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, discarding the concepts of expansion, superiority, and domination, commitment to the Palestinian people's national rights, and respecting and asserting the legal, historical, and spiritual Palestinian, Arab, Islamic, and Christian rights to Jerusalem.

Without this, talk about peace will simply be void of any substance, blocking the way of any Arab partner who is willing to shoulder the responsibility for peace and contribute to its establishment.

The participant leaders agreed to hold their next meeting in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, during the first week of June.

Inter-Arab: Mubarak, Husayn, 'Arafat Hold News Conference

NC1205112896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1000 GMT 12 May 96

[News conference by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, King Husayn of Jordan, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat with unidentified correspondents, following a tripartite summit at the Presidential Office in Heliopolis, Cairo—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mubarak] Our meeting today was announced previously, during my talks with my brother, King Husayn. That meeting was, in fact, decided on back when we met in Sharm al-Shaykh. As for its goal: The Palestinian issue is going through the last sensitive stage. There must be coordination among

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Jordan, Palestine, and Egypt so that we can push the peace process forward. As we know, the Palestinian cause is the core of the conflict. Unless we resolve the Palestinian issue, there will be no stability in this region. We are all eager to establish peace. We must keep that up. Thus, the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks must gain impetus, so that the picture can be complete.

We met today and talked about how to make some kind of progress. We will meet again for coordination, so that we can overcome this sensitive stage and help give the peace process momentum.

Of course we expect many problems. However, I think we can overcome this stage through cooperation and constant coordination.

Once again I welcome my brother His Majesty and Brother Yasir 'Arafat, in Cairo for the sake of cooperation to push the peace process ahead. Thank you.

[Husayn] Brother President, Brother Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat: Praise be to God, once again today we have met in Cairo, home of the Arabs. We are grateful and thankful to our brother, President Mubarak, for the hospitality and care, and for this fraternal climate that has prevailed during the meeting. We are accustomed to this atmosphere during our meetings with His Excellency. He is always frank and clear.

Thank God, and in confirmation of what President Mubarak said, we agree on the need to work together to support our brothers and kinsfolk who are in Palestine under their legitimate leadership and their leader. We shall contribute all our energies and capabilities so that they will regain their full rights on their national soil. We have no other goal in mind.

This requires coordination in the coming stages and the final negotiations phase. Thank God, there is full consensus that this coordination must continue. We three are responsible for it at the highest levels. Our governments and apparatuses, too, are responsible for it. We are going along the road toward a just and comprehensive peace, which we hope will be achieved in this region so that all will have the opportunity to live the kind of life we have been deprived of for a long time. We hope that, God willing, we will provide for our young people and future generations the future they deserve.

I express appreciation, thanks, and gratitude — until we hold the next meeting my brothers have agreed to hold in Jordan. We will meet again in the first week of the coming month. We will always meet as one heart and one hand. We hope all this will serve as the nucleus of that to which we aspire in our Arab world: the all-embracing meeting and cooperation for the good of this nation and its generations. May God's peace and mercy be upon you.

['Arafat] My brother, blessed President Husni Mubarak; Your Majesty King Husayn; my dear brothers: It is certainly a good and blessed day, not only for Egypt — where we meet, the land of Kinanah, which always embraces the hopes and aspirations of the Arab nation — and not only for Jordan or Palestinian, but for the entire Arab nation. This blessed meeting provides a foundation for further meetings. We will meet immediately after this; and this is what we are calling and hoping for. We hope to see Arab solidarity at its best.

I express thanks to blessed President Husni Mubarak and His Majesty King Husayn for this good invitation to support the Palestinian people at this particular stage, now that we have taken the first steps in the final phase of negotiations that will hopefully, God willing, lead to a Palestinian state with, as its capital, holy Jerusalem, the first of the two Qiblah's and the third holy mosque, the site of the Night Journey [al-Isra'] of Prophet Muhammad, may God's peace and mercy be upon him, as well as the birthplace of Christ, may peace be upon him.

In the meantime, this meeting supports the steps toward peace in the Middle East. We call for a just and comrehensive peace not only in Palestine, Jordan, or Egypt, but along the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, so that there can be a fair, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East, a peace under which our future generations and our children can live in safety and harmony and expect a brilliant and happy future, God willing.

We certainly have great responsibilities. However, we hold this blessed meeting on the land of Kinanah, which always embraces the problems, aspirations, and hopes of our Arab nation. This land will always be in our hearts, our senses, and our minds, as God is our witness. Thank you, Mr. President, and thank you, Your Majesty, for this meeting.

[Correspondent] My question is a general one: Have you reached a common understanding, during this meeting, on the issues to be discussed at the final negotiations — specifically: Jerusalem and the refugees?

I have a direct question for His Excellency President 'Arafat: What kind of support does the PLO hope to get from Jordan and Egypt so that future relations can be clearer and better?

['Arafat] What does a man need from his elder brother? These are my big brothers. I want everything possible. In fact, they spare no efforts and lose no opportunity to

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assist and back us. We thank them from the depth of our hearts for this support and backing.

[Mubarak] As for the second part of the question, whether we reached...

[Correspondent, interrupting] Common points of understanding regarding the matter of...

[Mubarak, interrupting] I do not believe there are points of disagreement — not just today but even before that — regarding resolving the Palestinian issue. The matter is in the hands of our Palestinian brothers, and we help and push within the proper framework so that we can reach a just solution to the problem.

[Correspondent] A question to President Mubarak: Does the peace process depend on the results of the Israeli elections, and was an assessment of the situation made today by the three leaders as regards the outcome of these elections and their possible repercussions, particularly on the Palestinian-Israeli track?

[Mubarak] Let met say something: The Israeli elections concern the Israeli people. We cannot interfere in their internal affairs. We have to deal with whatever government there is, because the issue is a just cause — whether with Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party or the Likud Party. That is something that concerns them; we, however, will negotiate and deal with whoever is chosen by the Israeli people, so that we can proceed with the peace process. We do not interfere in the details. The election process concerns Israel, and we can neither interfere nor play around with this election at all. We have nothing to do with it.

Is there anybody from Palestine here? Are you from there?

[Correspondent] My question is for His Majesty, the king. His Majesty said last week that the holy places must not be under anyone's control — neither Israel's nor anyone else's. What is His Majesty's view of the future of the Holy Land, and what can Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat say in this regard?

[Husayn] The answer is, very simply, that if the holy places are in the hands of my brother Yasir 'Arafat, we bless this and support him with all our might and resources. If the holy sites are in the hands of our Palestinian brothers, they represent all of us in the Arab and Islamic world, particularly in Jordan. This the answer I could give you. We say that Jerusalem, as far as the sacred sites are concerned, must remain a symbol of togetherness for believers in the one and only God. We hope God will help us toward that end. As for Arab Jerusalem, it is an occupied land and we hope God will help our brothers regain it so that Jerusalem may also be a symbol of the Palestinian-Israeli peace, and consequently of Arab-Israeli peace.

['Arafat] The statement that was made today was clear in this regard. Jerusalem is the direction to which Muslims first turned in their prayers, and the site of the third most sacred shrine. It is also the place visited by Prophet Muhammad, may peace be upon him, in his Night Journey, as well as the birthplace of Jesus Christ, may peace be upon him. Thus, it concerns Palestine, the Arabs, the Muslims, and the world's Christians.

[Correspondent] My question is for President Husni Mubarak. What we see today is a coordination summit, but it seems there is another coordination in the Arab world: Syrian-Iranian coordination. I would like to hear your opinion on that coordination, particularly in light of the visit today by [Syrian Vice President] Khaddam and [Lebanese Deputy Prime Minister] Michel al-Murr to Tehran?

[Mubarak] The coordination we have here is a summit coordination. We must not be alarmed by a meeting between Syria and Iran. This is something that does not alarm us. At any rate, if there is anything — even concerning our summit here — we will talk with the Syrian president. Even if it is in Iran, we will check. We must work as brothers. We do not want axes. We are meeting here because the people concerned with the Palestinian issue are here. If they are holding a meeting there, it must be for other reasons. However, as part of our meetings with Brother President Hafiz al-Asad we discuss all the points that may, every now and then, seem ambiguous.

[Correspondent] President Husni Mubarak, the Syrian track is at present facing a major problem, especially in the wake of Warren Christopher's statements that Syria does not want peace. Is there anything new on this track? Can Egypt play a role in giving impetus to this track, as it has always done, particularly after the Israeli elections?

[Mubarak] Let us not say that statements made from to time are stopping the peace process. Such statements might be made for consumption here or there. But the peace process is continuing, and I believe Syria and Lebanon are determined to have a just peace.

['Arafat] Let us not forget, Mr. President, that an agreement was reached: namely, to return to the 1993 agreement.

[Correspondent] My question is to His Majesty King Husayn. Can His Majesty tell the Arab nation from this good place about the substance of this particular summit, and decisions you reached? Thank you.

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[Husayn] I thank you for the question. Once again I believe my brothers have spoken, and I have the chance to give an idea about what was done at this meeting. It was a fraternal meeting. We reviewed developments in the first and most important issue, the issue of peace in this region — and the issue of Arab relations, starting with relations between ourselves, which are exemplary and, God willing, will remain so. We discussed the mechanism for following up on the developments. We hope this meeting, held to serve Palestine and the Arab nation, will, God willing, be a good start — and that this meeting, held in such a fraternal and responsible atmosphere, will also be a good start for other meetings at the level of the Arab nation and its leaders, in coming stages. Thank you.

[Correspondent] A question to His Excellency President Muhammad Husni Mubarak: Do you expect a breakthrough on the Syrian track before the end of this year? How much effect do you expect the outcome of the U.S. elections to have on this track?

[Mubarak] I hope with all my heart that the Syrian and Lebanese tracks will get a strong boost this year. As you said, the U.S. elections to be held in November might not allow the United States — from July onwards — to concentrate its attention on the issue. But Syria wants peace; so do Jordan and Israel. I hope they will make quick progress, though I do not expect them to reach a final solution this year.

[Correspondent, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] I represent CNN. I have a question for all three leaders. There were very strong Arab sentiments against the Israeli attacks on Lebanon, particularly following the attack on Qana. There were official Arab responses — some of them weak, while others did not go beyond verbal condemnation. How are the various governments dealing, at present, with these strong sentiments against Israel and against the peace talks?

[Mubarak, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] I do not believe that anyone can suppress Arab sentiments. It is a question of timing.

[Husayn, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] We all took steps that represented the sentiments of our peoples. We condemned and expressed our disappointment with what happened and with the losses among civilians in Lebanon. We must make efforts to underline our stand. We all deeply regret and condemn this. We must make sure that peace, as an objective, can be reached. The forces operating against peace are threatening the attainment of peace and affecting the future of the whole region.

[Arafat, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] I have nothing more to add to what the president and His Majesty said. But you must remember, and the Palestinians and Lebanese have paid the price.

[Correspondent] A question for His Majesty King Husayn: Recent reports indicate that the closer peace gets to its final phases, the more people talk about the other alternative. What is your comment?

[Husayn] Oh mightiest God! [expression meaning: "What can I say?"] [laughter] There is no alternative. We recognize no Palestinian leadership except the PLO and brother Yasir 'Arafat. We support and back the brothers and urge them to get together, reach an understanding and stand in a single line, as a single man and a single heart. There is no other alternative.

This is the last time I answer this question. I hope there will be no reason to repeat it, unless the goal is to spoil the atmosphere and undermine this fraternal relation and the truthfulness in which I and the Jordanian government and people shoulder our responsibility to back our brothers in Palestinian. On this occasion, we congratulate the Palestinians on the recent elections and the new government, as well as all the other blessed steps leading to our the restoration of our brothers' full rights on their national soil and the setting up of their state, God willing [pause] and its capital, Jerusalem.

[Correspondent] Can we say that an understanding has been reached on certain points which when accepted by the Palestinian side, will achieve a just and comprehensive peace?

[Mubarak] Which of us do you want to answer the question? All of us?

First of all, we are talking generally about returning the lands to their legitimate owners. As for the details involved, this is up to the Palestinian Authority. We cannot fail to back whatever the Palestinian Authority agrees on.

[Correspondent] The tripartite summit is being held amid noticeable Arab and regional interest and is welcomed by the Arab League secretary general, who hopes it will serve as preparation for an Arab summit. Has this meeting prepared for such a summit?

[Mubarak] We hope an Arab summit will be held. However, it is difficult, under the present circumstances, to hold an all-embracing summit. As we said before, we are trying to meet at a mini-summit every now and then, and then expand the summit until the picture becomes clear and we can call a general Arab summit. This is what we aspire to.

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[Correspondent] Egyptian-Jordanian support for the Palestinians in the final stage negotiations takes the form of direct coordination with the Palestinian side. If efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace require support in order for the two other parties, Syria and Lebanon, to reach a comprehensive peace, how can such support be given, when there is no coordination with that side, and no request for support from them?

[Mubarak] You know the story. Why do you want me to get into this? We all are supporting the Syrian-Israeli and Lebanese-Israeli tracks. However, if each side reaches a solution and is facing problems, don't involve us in them. Keep them for later. [laughter]

['Arafat] At the last meeting with Peres, I insisted publicly, at the news conference, and urged Peres to return to the 1993 agreement. Thank god, they have returned to that agreement.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty, the positive growth in Egyptian-Jordanian relations, their understanding, and the current Jordanian-Egyptian-Palestinian common approach is a new development for joint action seeking participation and integration rather than competition. This is a positive indication that undoubtedly pleases the Arab nation. Can you envisage expanding this common approach and understanding and using it to involve other Arab parties to achieve Arab reconciliation?

[Husayn] If we speak frankly we may derail our efforts instead of making progress. Regarding the Syrian and Lebanese tracks, we are for Lebanon's independence and its exercising its sovereignty throughout its territory. We back Lebanon in its efforts to recover its territory. We adopt the same position regarding Syria and its regaining the Golan heights and establishing peace. However, the matter has nothing to do with us. Rather, it concerns our brothers, the other party, and the negotiating process. We support them with all our power and means, but we have to know exactly what to support and what is required of us.

Regarding Arab action, reconciliation and cooperation, this is our dearest wish. We cannot achieve this on our own but will begin with ourselves. God willing, we will work with our brothers toward this goal. Our contacts are continuing and we are trying to make further efforts, until Arab integration is achieved. God willing, Arab relations will be founded on mutual respect and a genuine desire to fulfill the ambitions of Arab people everywhere and restore the status they deserve in the world. We hope to achieve integration and cooperation and to have Arab relations founded on trust and frankness, and to be free of one-upmanship. We hope the goal of Arab leaders is to serve the Arab peoples, their goals and aspirations and to ensure the right of future generations to a free and decent life throughout the Arab world. We hope that, God willing, this will be achieved.

[Correspondent] Your Excellency President 'Arafat, under the special Jordanian-Palestinian relations certain statements were released by the Palestinian Authority [PA] accusing or casting doubt on Jordan's position on several issues, particularly its relations with Islamic groups — such as its relations with Hamas. Can we consider that this summit will put an end to such accusations?

['Arafat] First of all, I reject your saying that the PA cast doubt. We did not cast doubt. All we have said is that certain Hamas forces that live in Jordan released statements hostile to us. That is all we have said. We did not cast doubt. So withdraw your term "cast doubt." Relations between us and our brothers in Jordan are too strong to be marred. Someone here and there may say this or that, but this is not true.

[Husayn] If my brother His Excellency the President allows me: This issue was discussed and, in fact, there is no problem. Our stand is very clear. We will not allow any party to use Jordan as an arena for any action against Palestine, the PLO, His Excellency Brother President Yasir 'Arafat — or against the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian Arab people. Any encroachment in this respect will be considered to be crossing the red line, and we will stop it by any means. This is our clear position.

As for the media, it is also your responsibility — and to be careful that matters are not raised in such a way as to harm the sacred relations that exist between us and which, God willing, will continue.

[Correspondent] In light of Jordanian-Egyptian rejection of the policy of axes and alliances, how do you think the Arab League can become more effective, so as to close Arab ranks and cope with the current developments and the future prospects under the peace process?

[Mubarak] The Arab League combines all Arab countries. If there is a sure desire to close Arab ranks in a short time, I do not think we will tarry in achieving it. However previous events — the events in Kuwait and many others — have torn the Arab ranks apart. However, I hope with all my heart that this will be achieved. We are all acting to close Arab ranks through the Arab League.

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Inter-Arab: 'Arafat Optimistic Over Cairo Summit Results

NC1305101296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0945 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Rafah, 13 May (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has praised President Husni Mubarak's noble and courageous stance to push the final-status Palestinian-Israeli peace negotiations ahead.

Crossing the Rafah border today from Cairo en route to Gaza, the Palestinian president said in a statement: The people of Egypt, as is their tradition, and President Mubarak have been extremely generous and hospitable. President Mubarak is doing his utmost to realize a just peace and security in the Middle East and beyond. 'Arafat expressed his optimism over the results of the tripartite summit held in Cairo yesterday.

Marwan Kanafani, political adviser to President 'Arafat and a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, said the Cairo summit is considered the beginning of a series of meetings and conferences along the road to peace and the final solution for the Palestinian cause. He pointed out that another meeting among the three leaders will be held in Jordan at the beginning of June.

He expressed his hope that the third conference will take place in Jerusalem—the capital of the state of Palestine.

With regard to Israel's stance on the final solution and the issues of borders and refugees, Kanafani said Israel demanded that talks on this be postponed until after the Israeli elections.

Inter-Arab: Arab League Official on U.S. Position, Peace Process

NC1105063596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0510 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—Dr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, assistant Arab League secretary general for international political affairs, underlined the need for a more active and effective European role in the Middle East peace process.

In statements to AL-AHRAM published today, Dr. al-'Allaf said the Arab countries are eager to continue the dialogue with the European countries, overcome the obstacles impeding progress in this dialogue, and achieve the desired objective of boosting bilateral cooperation. He added that the next meeting in Cairo will discuss the results of the previous two meetings, held in 1994 and 1995, between the Arab League secretariat general and the European Union secretariat and continue the dialogue between the two sides. He noted that the Arab League is preparing to hold the "Post-Barcelona" seminar proposed by Secretary General Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid to lay the foundations for Arab-European cooperation.

Al-'Allaf went on to say: Now that the United Nations has confirmed that a massacre took place in Qana claiming the lives of 103 innocent victims and now that the international community has condemned it, we the Arabs must demand that the responsible Israeli officials be brought to trial as war criminals before international courts, as is the case in Bosnia. We should not be content with condemnation and denunciation.

He added that U.S. President Bill Clinton and Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres have proved that elections are more important than the peace process, which is very vital for the future of the region and which the Arab countries have taken seriously. He added: It is not in the interest of Syria, whose territories remain occupied, to impede this process because it is really seeking to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in a new Middle East advocated by the United States and Israel, which so far has not fulfilled its obligations toward the Palestinians in accordance with the Oslo agreement.

Dr. al-'Allaf said that the unprecedented U.S. concessions to Israel, flooding Israel with all the weapons of mass destruction, and the establishment of new alliances in the region that include Turkey and others, are unwarranted and a cause for concern because this conflicts with the U.S. role as the sponsor of the peace process sponsor.

The Arab League official underlined the need to maintain Arab and international pressure on Israel to make it comply with international legitimacy with regard to its nuclear armament.

Asked what he expects the prospects for peace to be in the future, he said: Neither optimistic nor pessimistic as far as the peace process is concerned. The matter depends on us, as Arabs, because we have learned that Israel will not voluntarily give back any legitimate right unless there is a firm Arab stand led by the influential Arab countries involved in the peace process.

Inter-Arab: Arab League Chief Backs Libya on Lockerbie Suspects

MM1005130496 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 May 96 p 6

[Report by Ashraf al-Faqiyy: "'Abd-al-Majid Tells AL-HAYAH: Al-Qadhdhafi's Position Legal; Escalation Cannot Resolve Lockerbie Issue"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has told a Libyan diplomatic delegation comprising some 25 diplomatic

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attaches that the League supports Libya's position of refusing to hand over the two Libyans suspected of involvement in the Lockerbie incident to the U.S. or British judiciary. He said that "the Security Council's resolution on extradition is illegal, since there is no extradition agreement between Libya and the Western states concerned with the crisis."

'Abd-al-Majid told AL-HAYAH that "the contacts made by the League succeeded in preventing the sanctions imposed on Libyan from being toughened." He stressed that "the Western stand on the Lockerbie crisis will not resolve the crisis, nor will it lead to the two suspects being brought to trial. The Libyan people are against the two Libyan citizens' extradition." [passage omitted]

Counselor Tal'at Hamid, official spokesman for the League, has told AL-HAYAH that 'Abd-al-Majid's talks in Libya will deal with developments in the Lockerbie case and the results of the efforts the League is making to find a peaceful solution to this issue in coordination with the five-member committee stemming from the OAU.

'Abd-al-Majid last visited Libya in April 1994. He met with al-Qadhdhafi in the Tarhunah area, which the U.S. Administration stresses contains a chemical weapons factory.

The spokesman criticized statements made by Pentagon spokesman Kenneth Bacon and his hint at the use of conventional military force against Libya. He said: "The threat to use force is now unacceptable in international relations."

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat To Present Statement to Legislative Council

JN1005124596 Gaza Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation Television Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The new government will hold its first meeting under President Yasir 'Arafat on 11 May. Yesterday, President 'Arafat announced the names of the new 21-member cabinet and appointed five other members with the rank of minister.

President 'Arafat declared that he will present the new cabinet's program to the next Legislative Council session, due to be held in Bethlehem next week, for a vote of confidence.

Ministerial portfolios are expected to be distributed during the government's next meeting.

Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet Meets; Committee Formed To Draft Policy Statement

JN1105142196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1114 GMT 11 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Gaza; from "Today's Event" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] The new Council of Ministers held its first meeting chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat at the Presidential Office in Gaza today. The meeting ended this afternoon.

The meeting was for acquaintance purposes. A committee was formed to draft the new government's policy statement, which will be presented at the Legislative Council meeting due to be held in Bethlehem next Wednesday and Thursday.

New Cabinet member Bashir al-Barghuthi spoke about the meeting:

[Begin al-Barguthi recording] The meeting was basically for acquaintance. The president welcomed the new and old ministers. The government policy statement was discussed, which should be a detailed statement that deals with all future aspirations of the new government. The presentation of the policy statement to the Legislative Council was delayed for two weeks in order to prepare for an expanded and serious policy statement. [end recording]

Al-Barghuthi said the new government's policy statement will include political issues, especially those related to the final-status negotiations including Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, borders, foreign relations, the Palestinian state, and the prisoners.

The new government's policy statement will also include several draft laws that organize Palestinian life. It will also include a development plan to improve the situation in Palestine in line with the citizens' requirements.

Al-Barghuthi added that the policy statement will win the confidence of the Legislative Council at the next meeting. He said the policy statement will include the aspirations of the new government. He added that the meeting was a ceremonial one, in which President 'Arafat welcomed the new cabinet members.

Minister Jamil al-Tarifi said that national unity was taken into consideration in the formation of the new ministerial setup.

Former PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud Darwish participated in the meeting. Two new government members 'Imad al-Faluji and 'Azzam al-Ahmad

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did not attend the meeting because they are out of the country.

Palestinian Affairs: Presidency Official on Cabinet Meeting, 'Arafat's Remarks

JN1105150496 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The new cabinet held a meeting chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat at the Presidency in Gaza this morning.

Presidency Secretary General al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim said that despite his indisposition, his excellency the president was eager to convene the new cabinet.

President 'Arafat said that this meeting came after the presidential and legislative elections and also after the great event represented by convening the Palestine National Council in the homeland for the first time in the wake of starting the process of liberation and establishing our people's Palestinian National Authority.

'Abd-al-Rahim added that President 'Arafat welcomed the new ministers, considering them a qualitative and bright gain, and asserted that they are a great asset to the homeland and to the National Authority, particularly under difficult circumstances which require completing the liberation of our homeland and building the institutions of our state.

President 'Arafat added that in the past phase we entrenched our feet on our land, but as of next month we will enter a new phase now that the final-phase negotiations have begun. He said that these negotiations need concerted efforts, and we should not be lenient in drawing the features of our future. The president asserted that the new cabinet will be up to the responsibility with which it is entrusted, God willing.

'Abd-al-Rahim added that President 'Arafat told the cabinet that no more than three new ministers will be added to the cabinet and that he will complete his consultations with some Palestinian political factions in order to finalize the new cabinet.

'Abd-al-Rahim said that the cabinet discussed the features of the policy statement which will be submitted to a special session of the Legislative Council within two weeks. The cabinet formed a committee to draft the policy statement. The committee includes ministers Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi, Bashir al-Barghuthi, Dr. Nabil Sha'th, Samir Ghawshah, Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Furayh Abu-Middayn, and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman. It will meet as of today to draft the policy statement which will discuss the achievements realized in the past two years as well as the obstacles that prevented the realization of other achievements, and the cabinet's plan of action on various levels in the coming phase.

'Abd-al-Rahim added that the president also told the cabinet that the portfolios will be distributed after the Cairo tripartite summit. The Palestinian delegation to this summit, which will be held tomorrow, will be led by brother President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] and includes brothers Mahmud 'Abbas, also known as Abu-Mazin, member of the PLO Executive Committee; al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim, secretary general of the Presidency; and Ahmad 'Abd-al-Rahman, secretary general of the cabinet.

A tripartite summit will be held in Cairo tomorrow, Sunday [12 May]. It will be attended by President Yasir 'Arafat, his brother Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and his brother King Husayn of Jordan.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, adviser to President Yasir 'Arafat, said that the tripartite summit will discuss the recent developments of the peace process and issues of mutual interest.

Palestinian Affairs: Official Says King Husayn's Remarks on Jerusalem Not Wise

JN1205073996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0520 GMT 12 May 96

[Telephone interview with Hasan 'Asfur, member of the Palestinian delegation to the Joint Palestinian-Egyptian Higher Committee, in Cairo by Fathi al-Barqawi in the Jericho studio; from the "A New Day" program—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [al-Barqawi] King Husayn made a statement yesterday at an air base east of the Jordanian capital, Amman. He said that the holy shrines in Jerusalem should not be under the control of any state or quarter. What is the Palestinian position on this issue?

['Asfur] I believe that we have rejected such statements in the past. The holy shrines are Palestinian and should remain so. I do not believe that such statements serve the Arab, Islamic, or Palestinian political positions. Such statements, in general, harm the stand of the Palestinian negotiator on Jerusalem. I believe that trying to separate the holy shrines from Jerusalem and, consequently, trying to fragment the issue of Jerusalem is not a wise position and is of no use right now.

I believe that if someone has an opinion, he can always express it within the framework of the summits and bilateral meetings. There are no secrets between the brothers in Jordan and the PLO. Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has always said that we want to speak openly together. I believe that these and many other

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issues will be tackled today with extreme openness, in the hope that matters will be set on the right course and kept far from the negative attitudes. I do not think that his statement was very wise.

[Al-Barqawi] King Husayn also said that East Jerusalem is Arab — he did not say Palestinian. He said that West Jerusalem is the capital of Israel, while East Jerusalem is an occupied Arab city. We will stop here, brother Hasan. The meaning is clear. Thank you and good morning.

['Asfur] Thank you.

Palestinian Affairs: Kanafani on Cairo Summit, Ties to Jordan

JN1305110596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0410 GMT 13 May 96

[Telephone interview with Marwan Kanafani, member of the Palestinian delegation to the Egyptian-Jordanian-Palestinian Cairo summit, in Cairo, by Fathi al-Barqawi, in the Jericho studio; from the "A New Day" feature—live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-Barqawi] Brother Marwan Kanafani, good morning.

[Kanafani] Good morning.

[Al-Barqawi] About the tripartite summit in Cairo yesterday among President Yasir 'Arafat, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and King Husayn; despite President 'Arafat's indisposition, he went to Cairo. It seems that the summit was important?

[Kanafani] The summit was important and President Yasir 'Arafat gave it special importance particularly since the final-status talks between ourselves and the Israelis have begun, and in light of the required coordination with the two neighbor sisters Egypt and Jordan.

As you said, despite President Yasir 'Arafat's cold, he insisted on taking part in this summit, meeting with his brothers President Mubarak and his majesty, and holding a lengthy news conference. Judging from the news conference and the final communique, it seems that the meeting fulfilled Palestinian aspirations, particularly with respect to achieving full coordination between ourselves and our brothers in Egypt and Jordan so that we can embark on the final-status negotiations and fulfill the hopes of the Palestinian people, first and foremost of course is the establishment of the independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as capital.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Marwan, the term coordination is too general. What issues did this coordination include?

[Kanafani] To be frank, it seems that some statements made yesterday were misquoted by the press. When he was asked about the statements attributed to him yesterday, his majesty the king said that what is acceptable to the Palestinian National Authority [PNA] and the PLO is acceptable to all the Arabs and to sisterly Jordan. He said that there are no differences regarding who represents the Palestinian people. In speaking about the legitimate Palestinian leadership, the king referred to President Yasir 'Arafat, the PLO, and the PNA by name. For his part, President 'Arafat praised this noble position by his majesty the king. I do not believe that there is any confusion or ambiguity.

[Al-Barqawi] There is no ambiguity. However, only the day before yesterday King Husayn said that the holy shrines in Jerusalem should not be controlled by any state or quarter?

[Kanafani] According to the final communique, what his majesty the king said is an indication of the importance of the Arab city of Jerusalem for the three religions and to the Muslims and Christians around the world. The final communique emphasized the Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, and Christian rights in this city and I believe that his majesty's statements were confined to this context.

[Al-Barqawi] There is also the issue of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and statements by official spokesmen in the Jordanian capital Amman following the suicide operations, particularly those carried out in Tel Aviv and Ashqelon?

[Kanafani] As you now, the president spent approximately one hour in a closed meeting with his brothers his majesty the king and President Husni Mubarak during which such matters were discussed. His majesty spoke about this issue later in the news conference. He said that they, that is the three leaders, discussed this matter and that Jordan will not allow any anti-National Authority action in Jordan or any incitation having to do with the PNA to be launched from Jordan. This statement by his majesty was welcomed and received with great satisfaction by Palestinians. I hope that we will all work together to face the greater danger and challenge; namely, the final-status talks between us and the Israelis.

[Al-Barqawi] Does the fact that the heads of intelligence services of the three states were there and held a separate meeting indicate that there are security problems?

[Kanafani] There are security problems, but they are not any different from the normal problems that usually occur between neighbor states. We believe that political and economic coordination should be followed by coordination in security affairs so that the Palestinian, Jordanian, and Egyptian people can live a safe and

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secure life without having to fear any conspiracies directed from abroad or that the territories of one of these states will be used for incitation against another country. We believe that the talks in the various fields, including security are useful for all parties.

[Al-Barqawi] Brother Marwan, let us not hide the facts. The Palestinian-Jordanian relations always witness ups and downs. How do you describe them now?

[Kanafani] I do not believe that the Jordanian-Palestinian relations are undergoing any ups and downs. They are going through what any normal relations between two neighbor states go through, particularly if we take into consideration the demographic, economic, and political intertwinement between them due to the geographical proximity of the two states and to the demographic exchange that occurred after a large number of Palestinians were expelled from their homeland.

I believe that, basically, we are bound by relations of brotherhood. We also enjoy this kind of relationship with the friendly and fraternal Egyptian people. The Jordanian-Palestinian relations are based on kinship and brotherhood, and as described by President Yasir 'Arafat, they are twins, which means that they are closer than sisterly relations. Of course these relations will encounter some problems, as I said, by virtue of this exchange and this intermingling between the two peoples, their interests, goals, and hopes. I do not believe that Jordanian-Palestinian relations are undergoing a crisis. I do hope that there will not be any crisis in the future because we are fraternal and twin peoples, as expressed by President Yasir 'Arafat.

[Al-Barqawi] Then we should expect a supportive Jordanian position during the final-status negotiations which are expected to resume within a few weeks?

[Kanafani] This is what his Majesty King Husayn stressed.

[Al-Barqawi] With regard to Egyptian-Palestinian relations, it seems that matters could not be better.

[Kanafani] As they have always been. Our relations with the Egyptian people and Government, and between President Mubarak and his brother President Yasir 'Arafat in particular, are based on mutual understanding, respect, and common hopes and history. There is full trust between the two leaderships and peoples.

[Al-Barqawi] We hope that inter-Arab relations will always be at their best. Thank you and good morning.

[Kanafani] Thank you and good morning to you.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Previews Cairo Tripartite Summit

NC1105064296 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 11 May 96

[Interview with Palestinian cabinet member Dr. Nabil Sha'th, in Gaza, by 'Adil 'Abd-al-Tawwab, in Cairo, on 11 May; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] ['Abd-al-Tawwab] Good morning Dr. Nabil.

[Sha'th] Good morning.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] What do you expect from the tripartite summit to be held in Cairo tomorrow, Sunday [11 May]?

[Sha'th] Actually the summit signals a desire for greater inter-Arab coordination and I hope it will be the beginning of greater inter-Arab coordination in support of the Palestinian cause and the Palestinian Authority [PA] in its important final-status negotiations with Israel. The summit is at the initiative of President Husni Mubarak, who played a great role in backing the rights of the Palestinians and in attempting to rally the Arabs around the Palestinian issue, thus giving the Palestinians important negotiating cards at this stage, in which we are beginning the final-status talks while Israel has not implemented the results of the previous negotiations.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Does the Palestinian side have specific requests to make at this summit, particularly with regard to the peace process with Israel and the final-status negotiations?

[Sha'th] Undoubtedly the peace that links Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan is a final peace. Israel looks forward to translating this peace into relations, normalization, and new economic forms. Thus, there are important cards in the hands of Egypt and Jordan, through their relations with Israel, cards which if used intelligently and effectively could constitute an element of pressure on Israel to recognize Palestinian, Arab, and Islamic rights in the final-status negotiations. We are going to negotiate over Jerusalem, which is in the hearts of Arabs and Muslims. We will talk about the return of the refugees, an end to settlements, and Israeli withdrawal. All this depends on Israel's implementation of Resolutions 242 and 338, the same resolutions under which Egypt and Jordan negotiated with Israel to regain their land. As it has demonstrated to us on many occasions, Israel can back down. There is a large antipeace camp in Israel. Therefore, rational and intelligent Arab pressure using the same resolutions and agreements could support the Palestinian side and give

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the Palestinian negotiators a negotiating card for their tough talks with Israel in the coming stage. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Iranian Plan To Kill Hamas Leaders Opposing Terror Thwarted

TA1205050496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Palestinian security officials say they have uncovered and thwarted Iranian plans to assassinate Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leaders in the West Bank and Gaza who opposed plans to carry out terrorist attacks against Israel. The Palestinian security sources told Qol Yisra'el that the Hamas leadership abroad were party to the plans, which included a wave of car bombings inside the autonomy to embarrass the Palestinian Authority.

Palestinian Affairs: Official—Secret Apparatus Aimed To Kill Hamas Leaders

TA1205090596 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 10 May 96 p 5

[Report by Munir Abu-Rizq]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza — Colonel Muhmmad al-Masri, the intelligence service official in charge of information and security for political parties, disclosed that there have been assassination attempts — foiled by the Palestinian security forces — against the leaders of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and the movement's military wing known as the al-Qassam Brigades. Col. Muhmmad al-Masri said that those attempts were carried out by a secret apparatus and were planned by the Hamas leadership in Tehran after the domestic leadership refused to abide by the decisions of the leadership abroad and expressed their desire to cooperate with the Palestinian Authority [PA].

Col. al-Masri described Shaykh Ahmad Yasin as someone who holds sincere and honorable positions and as a example for genuine and noble Islamists inside the territories. He said that President 'Arafat is exerting intense efforts to obtain Shaykh Yasin's release.

Col. al-Masri affirmed the existence of secret efforts by Islamic figures to bridge the gap between Hamas and the PA. He warned that the policy of siege and starvation could promote a climate of extremism and violence.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli Talks: 'Secret' Talks—Hebron Evacuation To End After Elections

TA1105174696 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 11 May 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israel has secured Palestinian consent to completing the evacuation of Hebron after the elections. The consent was secured in a series of secret Israeli-Palestinian discussions held over the past few days. The contacts were led by Uri Savir and Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. The final agreement will be presented by Prime Minister Shim'on Peres at the cabinet meeting tomorrow.

Our political correspondent 'Imanu'el Rosen reports that the agreement states that Israel will abide by its commitment to redeploy its troops in Hebron, but the timetable will be decided in accordance with security factors.

Arab-Israeli Talks: Hebron Meeting With Israelis on Transfer of Powers Ends

JN1205135196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1300 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian-Israeli meeting, which was held in the city if Hebron to discuss transferring the remaining civilian powers in the governorate, ended this afternoon.

Ahmad Faris, director general of the Ministry of Civilian Affairs, voiced his satisfaction with the results of the meeting. In statements to our correspondent in Hebron, he also asserted that the meeting proceeded according to the plan set by the Palestinians.

Arab-Israeli Talks: Security Considerations To Decide Hebron Redeployment Date

TA1205082796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent Yo'el Nir has learned that the final date of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in Hebron will be determined with the Palestinians after the elections in Israel. Meanwhile, it has been decided to begin preparations in the security and civilian spheres for the redeployment. Our correspondent reports that final date will be determined solely on the basis of security considerations.

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Algeria

Algeria: Zeroual Memorandum Proposes Constitutional Reforms

LD1105172096 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in French 1600 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Presidency today handed the memorandum containing President Zeroual's proposals to the national figures, parties, and organizations that were involved in the recent consultations. The addressees will have to give their views on the content of the memorandum within 15 days.

This 42-page-long memorandum proposes the review of the Constitution in order to consolidate the democratic and republican principles on which the Algerian state is based and consolidate the institutional structure. The memorandum also proposes amendments to the executive, legislative, and judicial powers.

The president of the republic will be allowed to seek reelection only once, the memorandum proposes. The creation of a Council of the Nation [Conseil de la Nation] as a second chamber alongside the National People's Assembly, and the setting up of a High State Court [Haute Cour de l'Etat] to reinforce the judicial power are also proposed.

With regard to the review of the law on political parties, the document suggests that a party should have at least 800 members in every province. Concerning the electoral law, the adoption of a proportional system is proposed, together with the redefinition of the electoral constituency by reconciling the national nature of the mandate with specific local conditions.

Moreover, the memorandum proposes a general initiative for a conference on national accord at the beginning of the summer and a referendum on the review of the Constitution before the end of this year, followed in the first half of 1997 by parliamentary elections and local elections in the second half of the same year.

Algeria: 1 Killed, Several Wounded in Blida Car Bomb Attack

LD1105132196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement released by the security service says that a car bomb exploded at 0255 this morning in the Bab Errahba district of Blida, killing one person and wounding several, including five seriously.

The same source indicates that rescue workers accompanied by security services went immediately to the scene to provide first aid to the victims of the explosion.

Algeria: Blida Blast Kills 3, Wounds 60, Follows Shoot-Out

LD1205095296 Paris France-Info Radio in French 0900 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The explosion of a booby-trapped truck in Blida yesterday morning killed three people and wounded about 60 others. This piece of information was given by the Algerian press which said that the attack was preceded by a shoot-out aimed at diverting policemen's attention while the truck full of explosives was parked nearby.

Algeria: 4 More Death Sentences Bring Total Over 1,000

LD1305100196 Paris Radio France International in French 0630 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A court in Oran sentenced to death in absentia four Islamic fundamentalists charged with murdering a man and wounding six more in a bar in Oran in September 1994, Algerian radio reported. More than 1,000 Islamic fundamentalists have been sentenced to death in Algeria since 1993, most of them in absentia.

Egypt

Egypt: Envoy to Israel Says No Meetings Until After Elections

NC1005164096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1546 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 May (MENA)—Egypt's Ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni has stated Egypt's readiness to cooperate with any government the Israeli people elect, as long as its intentions are peaceful and it works toward establishing stability in the region.

Basyuni said upon arrival at Cairo Airport from Tel Aviv this afternoon on a visit of several days that he will meet Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to discuss developments, the peace process, and the Israeli elections. The elections will be held at the end of this month and Egypt is following them with great interest out of its concern for the continuation of the peace process.

Muhammad Basyuni denied the possibility of holding meetings now between Egyptian and Israeli officials

He said that contacts continue with the Israelis but that meetings will be postponed until after the Israeli elections and the formation of the new government, which we hope will adhere to the promises Israel signed in the Oslo agreement.

Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni clarified that the Palestinian track is currently moving in the right

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direction. Egypt pays special attention to it since it is the essence of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

He said that without a just solution to the Palestinian problem, there will be no real peace in the region.

With regard to recently suspended negotiations on the Syrian track, agreement has been reached to resume them in addition to negotiations on the Lebanese track through contacts that recently took place after the Israeli military operations in Lebanon.

Egypt: Foreign Minister Musa Meets With PLO's Mahmud 'Abbas

NC1105133796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1315 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met with Mahmud 'Abbas, PLO Executive Committee member and head of the Palestinian side of the Egyptian-Palestinian committee, which will meet at the Foreign Ministry today.

The two discussed the topics on the agenda of the Egyptian-Palestinian committee and the strategy to be adopted for the Palestinian-Israeli final status talks. They also discussed bilateral relations and ways of strengthening them in all domains.

Egypt: Officials, Papers View Importance of Tripartite Summit

NC1105071796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0540 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 11 May (MENA)—Egyptian Prime Minister Dr. Kamal al-Janzuri stated that the tripartite summit to be held tomorrow, Sunday [12 May], in Cairo between President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat is aimed at giving impetus to the peace process, achieving progress on the Palestinian-Israeli track, and boosting the efforts to resume the peace negotiations between Syria and Israel.

In statements published today by the weekly AKHBAR AL-YAWM, Dr. al-Janzuri said the summit also falls within the framework of backing Lebanon in ending the Israeli occupation of the south so as to reach a comprehensive peace in the region.

The paper says the tripartite summit talks are expected to touch on the means of restoring Arab solidarity — where Egypt can play a prominent role in view of its Arab, regional, and international status, which qualifies it for that role.

Dr. al-Janzuri also told the paper that peace in the Middle East will ultimately be achieved because it is the strategic choice of all the region's countries and the only way to achieve economic development. He added that peace will inevitably come in the end, despite the repeated attempts to stop it and despite the difficulties on all tracks. [passage omitted]

In their editorials today, AL-AHRAM and AL-JUMHURIYAH stress that tomorrow's summit highlights Egypt's important role in backing the Middle East peace process and its efforts to remove all obstacles to that process. AL-AHRAM says this mini-summit falls within the framework of positive confrontation of the obstacles resulting from Israeli arrogance and the unfair U.S. position. It adds that the current conditions in the region, especially in the wake of the recent Israeli attacks on Lebanon, underline the need for Arab coordination and for showing all forms of possible Arab strength so that Israel and the United States can feel that the Arab side will not relinquish its just rights and will not agree to let the fate of the region be subject to narrowly based partisan interests decided in Tel Aviv and Washington.

AL-JUMHURIYAH writes that holding the summit after the incidents in the region that almost destroyed the peace efforts — as a result of Israel's irresponsible actions — confirms that the peace process between the Arabs and Israel is capable of continuing despite the difficulties it is facing. The paper says this summit will provide an opportunity to discuss the issues on the agenda of the final negotiations between Palestine and Israel. The paper adds that the summit will also discuss how to achieve Arab solidarity and reconciliation and how to strengthen the Arab League in its confrontation with all the schemes targeting Arab identity.

Libya

Libya: Opposition Accuses Regime of 'Intensifying Intimidation'

MM1305100796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 May 96 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Six Libyan Opposition Organizations Call For Condemnation of 'Regime's Practices'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Six Libyan opposition organizations issued a joint statement yesterday urging Arab and international human rights organizations "to condemn the despotic practices" of the Libyan regime. The statement was signed by the Libyan Constitutional Union [al-ittihad al-dusturi al-libi], the Libyan National Alliance [al-tahaluf al-watani al-libi], the Libyan Islamic Group, the Libyan Nationalist Organization [al-tandim al-watani al-libi], the Libyan Democratic Nationalist Grouping [al-tajammu' al-watani al-demoqrati al-libi],

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and the Libyan Movement for Change and Reform [al-harakah al-libiyah lil-taghyir wal-islah]. The statement said:

"The Libyan opposition groups and forces would like to draw the attention of Arab and international public opinion to the fact that (Libyan Leader Mu'ammar) al-Qadhdhafi's ruling regime in Libya has escalated its despotic and terrorist policies against our people in a manner that our country has not experienced even under the Italian occupation.

"At a time when our people in Libya are on the verge of starvation and when all the basic infrastructure facilities and the education, health, and housing sectors are collapsing, with many urban areas plagued by the spread of diseases, the regime's security organs and the 'Revolutionary Committees Movement' are intensifying their intimidation measures against the citizens' security and safety. Over the past months the campaigns of mass arrests and torture have increased, while a total blockade was imposed on many cities, isolating them from the outside world and subjecting them to water and electricity cuts, while their people are deprived of the freedom of travel and movement."

The statement added: "The despotic measures culminated when the Libyan ruling regime recently resorted to the very same despotic measures adopted by the Israeli authorities against the Palestinians in the occupied territories. The security organs have demolished the homes of several Libyan families, and displaced them."

The statement went on: "It has become clear that the ruling regime in Libya, which has spread poverty and deprivation and led the country to an unprecedented political, economic, and social decline, is facing a crisis and threatened by collapse. Therefore, it will not hesitate to use the worst methods in order to muzzle the free sons of our people who are trying to build a new Libya based on justice, equality, freedom, and democracy. The regime's practices will only strengthen our people's resolve to continue the struggle to free Libya from its clutches.

"The signatories of this statement urge Arab and international public opinion, and all the Arab, regional, and international human rights organizations to condemn these despotic terrorist practices and adopt positions of solidarity with the Libyan people in their ordeal."

Libya: JANA Editor Criticizes Clinton's Defense of Israel

LD1105164796 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0930 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 11 May (JANA) — The U.S. President has admitted that the Israeli enemy deliberately shelled the UN post in Qana, Lebanon. [passage omitted]

The JANA Arab Affairs editor has commented on the U.S. President's statements in which he defended the Israelis and their barbaric crime at Qana, Lebanon. The editor said that despite the Israeli admission of committing the Qana crime against the babies, children, women, and the elderly of Lebanon who were taking refuge at a UN post, the U.S. Government is rudely defending such an abominable crime as if it is more Israeli than the Israelis themselves.

An Israeli newspaper has quoted the Israeli terrorists who committed the Qana crime as saying that they had no remorse for this terrorist act. They have even praised it, which is a clear admission of committing this barbaric terrorist act.

The editor compared the American stance, which is entirely biased towards the Israelis justifying their vile crimes against Arabs, and the American stance towards the Arab nation and the fabrication of flimsy excuses to justify any aggressive act and any aggressive measures against any Arab country. Examples of this are its imposition of the unjust sanctions on the Great Jamahiriyah for the mere suspicion that two Libyan nationals are connected to the so-called Lockerbie issue, and its feverish efforts to hinder the issuance of any resolution by the Security Council condemning the terrorist crime of killing over 100 babies, children, women, and elderly people in Lebanon. This has led the Lebanese Government to retract its complaint to the Security Council, since it is sure that the Security Council will not issue any resolution condemning the Israeli enemy as long as America dominates it.

At the end of his commentary, the JANA Arab Affairs editor called upon Arab states to take a clear stance towards America, which has gone, unacceptably, too far in insulting the Arab nation and slapping it.

Libya: Official Denounces UK Minister's Allegations on 'Threat'

LD1005145596 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0940 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 10 May — The JEWISH CHRONICLE newspaper has quoted the English foreign minister [Malcolm Rifkind] as saying before a

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conference held by Europe's leading Jewish rabbis in London that extremist regimes such as Libya constitute a direct threat to Europe and that countries such as Libya have missiles that can actually reach parts of Europe. It has also reported his call for international reactions to what he described as terrorism.

In this respect, a responsible source at the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has given the following statement:

The Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah denounces such allegations and stresses that there is no truth about Libya constituting a threat to Europe since it has often called for withdrawal of foreign fleets from the region and for making the Mediterranean a lake of peace for its peoples.

At the same time, the English minister has ignored the nuclear arsenal and weapons of mass destruction possessed by the Israeli enemy in occupied Palestine which threaten the entire region. The oppression, murder, and starvation the Palestinians are undergoing at the hands of the terrorist Jewish organizations inside occupied Palestine and the incident at the Mosque of Abraham in Hebron in which dozens of worshipers were killed are nothing but evidence of the vainglory of the racist policy exercised by the Israelis in usurped Palestine.

The minister has also ignored the historical responsibility of the English government when it gave Palestine to the Jews to establish their racist state, expel its Palestinian inhabitants, make them homeless, and chase them around the earth to implement the so-called Balfour Declaration [of 1917].

The Great Jamahiriyah has commercial and economic relations with the various European states and it aims to develop and promote relations of cooperation with them.

What the named newspaper has attributed to the English minister is not surprising, as he said it at a meeting of Jewish rabbis, of whom he is a subject.

The coinciding of what has been attributed to the English minister with the report issued by the U.S. State Department accusing Libya of terrorism is evidence that the English policy is still spinning in the orbit of U.S. policy and is repeating what it alleges, despite the rejection of the living powers and most British people of the policy of the Conservative Party, which since its foundation has always sponsored the interests of American imperialism and international Zionism rather than British interests.

Morocco

Morocco: Prime Minister on Algerian Ties, Sahara Referendum

NC1105184896 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 May 96

[Interview with Moroccan Prime Minister Abdellatif Filali by Rif'at al-Najjar; place and date not given—live or recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Filali] Morocco and Algeria have always lived as brothers. There are shared families living in both countries and there is common trade across the borders. However, circumstances—I do not know why—made them decide to close the borders [word indistinct] at the Morocco GATT meeting.

Algeria and Morocco are two Mediterranean countries and neighbors of Europe and both have firm ties with Europe, especially with the European Union [EU]. The EU has always asked for the existence of an Arab Maghreb group to deal with so that there can be a quasi balance in negotiations and interests.

Regrettably our current circumstances have not yet led to this conclusion. Tunisia sought direct negotiations with the EU. Morocco also [words indistinct] its interests. Algeria is also engaged in negotiations and this is unreasonable.

[Al-Najjar] A UN referendum was supposed to be held on the Sahara. Are there any arrangements in this regard?

[Filali] We are awaiting the secretary general's report. I believe it will be out on the 18th or 20th of (?this) month. In his report to the Security Council, he voiced pessimism about the UN's future presence in this region. But sometimes pessimism can be a mere tactic. We hope to reach a solution as soon as possible to effect this referendum.

Morocco: Interior Ministry Announces Results of Elections

LD1105220396 Rabat RTM Television Network in Arabic 2030 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Summary] The minister of state for the interior has issued a statement on the results of the parliamentary and local by-elections yesterday. With regard to the parliamentary by-elections, Ali Rahimi, from the Constitutional Union, won the seat in Imintanout constituency with 56.06 percent, and Karim Mis of the National Popular Movement won the other seat in El Amria constituency with 30.38 percent of the votes. The turnout in the two constituencies was 34.11 and 61.25 percent respectively.

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Regarding the local by-elections which were held in 179 constituencies affiliated to 160 local authorities, 363 candidates were contesting the seats in 33 municipalities and 127 rural local authorities. The Istiqlal Party won 22 seats, the Popular Movement 21, the Constitutional Union 10, the Socialist Union of Popular Forces 8, the National Rally of Independents 8, the National Popular Movement 3, the Democratic National Party 3, the Party of Progress and Socialism 2, and 102 seats were won by independent candidates.

On the same occasion, a by-election in the third constituency affiliated to the Chamber of Agriculture of El Araich was won by the only candidate, Mohamed Halimi.

Sudan

Sudan: Rebel Forces Training in Eritrea

LD1105123296 London THE GUARDIAN in English 11 May 96 p 12

[Article by Peter Biles, BBC World Service correspondent: "Sudan Faces New Threat From East"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Sudanese rebels, hoping to open a new military front against Khartoum, are training in Eritrea. Peter Biles went to a camp of the Sudan Alliance Forces, led by Brigadier 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khalid (right) [photo shows close-up of Khalid in camouflage utilities and camouflage forage cap]

Close to the frontier town of Teseney, in the scorching arid lowlands of western Eritrea, a rebel Sudanese training camp accommodates more than 50 fighters.

The Sudan Alliance Forces (SAF), with the direct backing of the Eritrean leadership, are intent on opening up a new military front in the north of Sudan.

"The aim is to overthrow the regime of the National Islamic Front (NIF) in Khartoum and to build a new Sudan. "says Brigadier 'Abd-al-'Aziz Khalid, a former Sudanese army officer now active in opposition circles in Eritrea.

The rebels, armed with Kalashnikov rifles, anti-tank weapons, and machine guns, are fired up by the name "Turabi" echoing across their parade ground. A picture of Hasan al-Turabi, the leading Islamic ideologue in Sudan, is pinned over the bull's-eye for target practice with AK-47s.

Brig Khalid insists that there are other Sudanese military training camps in the border region of western Eritrea and that his units have already infiltrated Sudan to engage in small-scale guerrilla activity and provoke mutiny in the Sudanese armed forces. Diplomats in the region confirm one recent incident, in which a Sudanese police station near Kassala was attacked.

The rebels say their members include defectors from the Sudanese military who have brought their uniforms and weapons with them. "Khartoum is our quartermaster," Brig Khalid jokes.

He denies that Eritrean troops have been helping to train or equip the Sudan Alliance Forces. The Eritrean president, Isaias Afwerki, says training has been provided to some Sudanese opposition groups.

A recent amateur video recording showed the leader of the southern-based Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), Dr John Garang, thanking a group of Eritrean soldiers for their assistance in training SPLA forces. The SPLA has been fighting the Khartoum regime since 1983.

"Eritrea will provide any type of support for the people of Sudan. The sky is the limit," said President Isaias. "We believe that it's an obligation on the part of Eritrea because the Sudanese people supported us during our struggle for independence."

Eritrea has not disguised its animosity towards Sudan's Islamic leaders, whom it accuses of trying to destabilise the whole region with their fundamentalism.

The Eritrean leadership fears that its hard-won stability as a new independent country is being undermined by attacks in western Eritrea instigated by Khartoum.

Eritrea broke off diplomatic relations with Sudan in December 1994 and this year I handed over the empty Sudanese embassy Asmara to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), an umbrella organisation for Sudanese opposition movements from North and South. Eritrea has hosted conferences of the NDA in Asmara in an effort to create a united political front against Khartoum.

While the Sudan Alliance Forces are allowed to operate freely in western Eritrea, the Eritrean military has a significant presence of its own in the area. Tanks and anti-air-craft guns are stationed at Teseney.

But, in spite of the increasing tension, Eritrea says talk of war is exaggerated. "We are ready to defend ourselves but we don't have any plan to attack Sud..." said the Eritrean army chief of staff, Brigadier Jebrihiwet Zemiceal.

Confirmation that Sudanese rebels are training in Eritrea may well raise the stakes as Sudan finds itself increasingly shunned by neighbours and having to spread its defences more thinly.

The SPLA has never succeeded in carrying its war into northern Sudan, but a broader coalition of opposition

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forces rallied against Khartoum along Sudan's eastern flank could make a significant difference. Eritrea firmly believes that the Sudanese military is weak and dispirited and that the days of the NIF are numbered.

"Optimists would say one year...pessimists would say two. It's just a matter of time," said president Isaias.

[In addition to the above-mentioned portrait of Khalid, other pictures include a photograph showing 20 soldiers involved in marksmanship training with folding-stock Kalashnikov rifles and a map which shows the "Guerrilla Camps area" to be located approximately half way between Teseney and the Ethiopian border]

Sudan: Over 500 Workers Expelled From Libya Arrive at Border

NC1205150196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 12 May (MENA)—Three trucks coming from Libya have arrived at the city of al-Humrah on the Sudanese-Libyan border. They were carrying more than 500 Sudanese employees who worked in Libya under official work contracts, after the Libyan authorities terminated their contracts and ordered them to leave the country.

In April, the Libyan authorities barred 28 Sudanese nationals from entering the country and returned them to the (al-Salafi) border camp, even though they carried genuine official entry visas.

The number of Sudanese nationals expelled from Libya, under its decision to expel foreign workers since September last year, has reached approximately 150,000. They began to return via various routes since October 1995. The number of returnees increased before the blessed 'Id al-Adha, as the Libyan authorities intensified their campaign on foreigners.

Official circles at the Sudanese Expatriates Agency estimate the number of Sudanese nationals legally residing in Libya at about 300,000. There is no census of those staying in Libya illegally.

Tunisia

Tunisia: Sources Deny Peres To Visit Next Week

NC1105152896 London MBC Television in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a telephone call to MBC, Tunisian sources denied reports carried by the Israeli radio yesterday that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will visit Tunisia next week in a move that is unprecedented in the history of Israeli-Tunisian ties.

On the Israeli side, however, sources in the Prime Ministry confirmed that Peres' official itinerary includes a possible visit to Tunisia.

Tunisia apologized for not receiving Peres after the latter's visit to Morocco during which he voiced a wish to visit Tunisia.

Tunisia: Human Rights Institute Director Arrested

LD1205103296 Paris Radio France Internationa. in French 0630 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The director of the Arab Institute of Human Rights [Frej Fneich] was arrested on Friday [10 May]. According to the [Paris-based International] Federation of Human Rights, he is been detained by the Tunisian authorities and was reportedly arrested at Tunis airport on Friday as he was about to take a flight for Marseille. The International Human Rights Federation has demanded his immediate release.

Western Sahara

Western Sahara: Polisario Blames Morocco, UN for Peace Plan Failure

LD1205235396 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2300 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Polisario has blamed Morocco and the United Nations for the failure of the Western Sahara peace plan.

In a memorandum to the UN Security Council in reply to the latest proposals by UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali on the status quo in the former Spanish colony, the Polisario stressed that the stalemate in the Western Sahara peace plan is mainly due to Morocco's open opposition to a fair and free referendum in the region and lack of firmness by the UN peacekeeping forces while supervising the implementation of the peace plan.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Opposition Reports Shiite Muslim Dies From Police Blows

NC1205210696 Paris AFP in English 2053 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, May 12 (AFP) - A Shiite Muslim has died after being beaten by police during a protest west of the Bahraini capital, an opposition group said Sunday [12 May]. The Bahrain Freedom Movement, in a statement sent to AFP, said 'Abd-al-Amir Hasan Rustum, a mentally disturbed 26-year-old, was beaten on the head and arrested last week in the Diyah district. "The interior ministry informed the parents of 'Abd-al-Amir on Saturday of the death of their son, whose body has not been returned to the family," the London-based group said. There was no official confirmation of the report.

Bahrain has been rocked by 17 months of unrest led by Shiites demanding a restoration of the parliament that the Sunni Muslim-led authorities suspended in 1975. More than 20 people have been killed in the violence.

Kuwait

Kuwait: Government Reiterates Iraq Responsible for Citizens' Suffering

LD1205175996 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1520 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 12 May (KUNA) — The State of Kuwait today reiterated that responsibility for the suffering of the Iraqi people falls upon the regime in Iraq, which persists in its refusal to implement all international resolutions related to the liberation war of Kuwait.

This came during the weekly meeting of the Kuwaiti Council of Ministers held under the chairmanship of Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, the acting prime minister and foreign minister.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dakhil al-Dakhil, minister of state for cabinet affairs and planning, indicated that the council stressed that the Iraqi regime's responsibility for the suffering of the Iraqi people is a consequence of its insistence to ignore the implementation of the Security Council's resolutions that express the international community's will. This exposes the region to additional tension and instability. [passage omitted]

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Ambulances, Other Aid Sent to Lebanon

LD1005201696 Riyadh SPA in English 1917 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, May 10, SPA — Lebanese Health Ministry has started distribution of a number of well-equipped ambulance vehicles dispatched by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia recently among hospitals and health centres in southern Lebanon.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as per directives of Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, has sent twenty ambulance cars along with big quantities of food materials, medicines, blankets and tents as urgent assistance ordered by King Fahd for the victims of the recent Israeli bombardment in south Lebanon.

Among the hospitals benefited from the recent assistance was the hospital of Qana village which witnessed the nefarious Israeli massacre against innocent civilians on April 18.

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Iraq: 'New' Working Session With UN Delegation Begins 10 May

JN1005172296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1655 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 10 May (INA)—The delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat began a new working session this evening, within the framework of the fourth round of talks on trading oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs. The delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat held a working session in this regard last night.

The United Nations announced this evening that UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali will meet with the heads of delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat late this evening, Baghdad time.

The INA correspondent in New York said that before this meeting the UN secretary general is scheduled to meet with the Security Council members as part of his periodic monthly meetings.

Iraq: Al-Anbari Cited on Oil-for-Food Standoff

MM1305114596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 May 96 pp 1, 6

[Unattributed report: "Al-Anbari Denounces U.S.-British Conspiracy; Crucial Phase In Resolution 986 Negotiations; Iraq Adheres to 'Red Lines'"]

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, AL-HAYAH — The negotiations between Iraq and the United Nations over the implementation of the "oil-for-food" formula as specified in Resolution 986 has entered a crucial phase leading toward either a total halt or a surprising agreement. UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali held a meeting the evening before last with Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, and Hans Corell, the legal adviser heading the UN delegation. General Secretariat sources have ruled out any breakthrough due to the gap between the U.S. and British stands, which have been espoused by the General Secretariat, and the Iraqi stand on the conditions for implementing Resolution 986. Iraqi sources have said that the Iraqi delegation will inform Butrus-Ghali that there are "red lines" which cannot be crossed. While General Secretariat sources have said that Butrus-Ghali has no other option but to present the memorandum of understanding with the U.S. and British amendments, since any agreement is subject to U.S. approval, and it is all up to Iraq.

The fourth round of the negotiations nearly collapsed as a result of the United States' and Britain's insistence on the terms they had submitted to the General Secretariat [which should be complied with] before Iraq can be allowed to sell oil worth $1 billion every three months for six months to meet urgent human needs in Iraq, and also because of Baghdad's rejection of these terms.

Al-Anbari said that the U.S.-British amendments to the text of the draft memorandum of understanding dated 10 April "are an attempt to rewrite Resolution 986, as though they (Washington and London) are regretting that version of the resolution" and its content as regards "taking account of Iraqi sovereignty, national security, and territorial integrity." He added that the amendments "torpedo" the provisions of the resolution, and that there is "a conspiracy by the United States, Britain, and some other states to commit mass annihilation in Iraq."

Al-Anbari accused the United States and Britain of "imposing" on Butrus-Ghali amendments to the text of the draft memorandum without giving him the power to amend or alter them. He added: "The two states' proposals have now become the General Secretariat's proposals."

Eyes were focused on the secretary general the evening before last, since all parties unanimously agree that the final decision depends on him. British sources believe that "the matter depends on Butrus-Ghali," while French diplomats believe that "the matter is in the secretary general's hands," and Iraqi officials believe "the matter is in his hands."

French sources have said that Paris does not intend to interfere in the negotiations or to propose changes to the U.S. and British amendments, "because we are committed to the principle of noninterference" in the negotiations, which were supposed to be limited to the General Secretariat and the Iraqi Government.

Al-Anbari said that "the matter is no longer in the secretary general's hands — which conflicts with what we had agreed." He said that the U.S. and British statements pointing to an imminent agreement entail "deception" and are aimed at staging "a distortion campaign against Iraq." He went on: "It seems that the resolution and the negotiations are a means designed to deceive the world and the Security Council."

He said that the Iraqi delegation agrees to some of the U.S. and British amendments. However, he stressed that there are "fundamental things" which Iraq cannot accept. "And I recommend that they should not be accepted, because I do not want my country to be partitioned or the north's separation from the rest of Iraq to be reinforced."

He pointed out that the amendments "give them the power to choose certain quarters to distribute in the north" the revenues allocated to the Kurds, namely $130-150 million, and "the power to determine the points of entry into Iraq for the trucks" to deliver food and medicines.

He added: "They also want to omit the reference to the food basket for all the country. They say that the (government's) ration card system is unfair, and they want to deny Iraqi banks any role in trade deals worth billions of dollars which have nothing to do with the frozen funds. Such things cannot be accepted."

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Al-Anbari pointed out that the implementation of Resolution 986 will gives the Iraqi citizen just $7 a month "with a thousand conditions involving observation, inspection, and scrutiny." And the first beneficiary from the "compensation fund and the (Rolf) Ekeus commission," entrusted with removing banned Iraqi weapons. [sentence as published]

He said that "it is an overt attempt to annihilate the Iraqi people," pointing to aFood and Agriculture Organization (FAO) report which stresses that 40 percent of Iraqi children are suffering from malnutrition. He went on to say: "They want to annihilate the Iraqi people. They are shedding crocodile tears over them (Iraqis)."

U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright had said that Resolution 986 "is aimed at guaranteeing the delivery of food and medicines to those who deserve them, and all the Iraqis have to do is to say yes." She added that "we must ensure that the [supplies] will be distributed to the Iraqi people, not Saddam Husayn's friends. And that he (Saddam) will not be in a position to reap the profit from the oil sales to build more palaces and buy more yachts."

She said that she wants the negotiations to succeed, but "the essence of the issue is that Saddam is responsible for the conditions his people are experiencing."

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's representative to the United Nations, has not ruled out a fifth round of negotiations, while informed sources have said that, if a fifth round is held, the reason will be that "it is difficult for anyone to bear the responsibility for the complete collapse" in the talks on the implementation of Resolution 986.

Iraq: Al-Anbari Reports Relative Improvement in UN Oil Talks

JN1105094896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0915 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] New York, 11 May (INA)—Chief Iraqi delegate Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari said that yesterday's meetings were useful. Al-Anbari was referring to his meeting with UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali, which was attended by Hans Corell, head of the delegation of the UN General Secretariat to the oil talks, and also to his working session with Corell.

Answering a question posed by the INA correspondent in New York, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari emphasized that things had changed somewhat for the better.

Al-Anbari added that he will remain in contact with Corell over the weekend. He said that the discussions on oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs were conducted in a businesslike atmosphere.

The statements by the chief Iraqi delegate came after a brief statement by UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali yesterday evening. The UN chief said: "I am more optimistic today than I was a few days ago."

The INA correspondent in New York indicated that these developments came about after a plenary working session attended by all members of both delegations yesterday.

Iraq: 'Sources' Report Butrus-Ghali Intervention in Oil-for-Food Talks

MM1305125596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 12 May 96 p 1

[Report by Raghidah Dirgham: "Butrus-Ghali Intervenes To Rescue 'Oil-For-Food' Negotiations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] New York — UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus-Ghali made extensive efforts in talks held to bring views closer between the Iraqi side and the U.S. side with a view to arriving at a compromise concerning the conditions for Baghdad's implementation of Resolution 986.

Informed sources have said that Butrus-Ghali and the UN General Secretariat's delegation to the "oil-for-food" negotiations made contacts on Friday [10 May] evening with the U.S. sides while the Iraqi delegation, headed by Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, was in a room nearby, to salvage the negotiations and work to secure compromise solutions.

The efforts produced no crucial results, whether regarding a complete halt to the talks or the attempt to bring the two sides' views closer.

The sources said that three main points are the cause of the gap between the Iraqi stand and the U.S.-British stand: the food basket question or the adoption of the ration card as a basis for distributing food in Iraq, international observation of the distribution of oil revenues throughout Iraq,...and the question of diplomatic immunities and privileges for those who will supervise the distribution and observation process.

According to the sources, the question of the Iraqi banks' role in the trade operations relating to Iraq's sale of oil worth $1 billion every three months over six months to meet urgent humanitarian needs for its citizens as stipulated in Resolution 986 has been tackled over the past few days. And so has the question the Security Council sanctions committee's powers to endorse Iraqi oil purchase operations.

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The secretary general spent some two hours on Friday night trying to reconcile Iraq's stand, which proceeds from the 10 April draft memorandum of understanding with the United Nations, with the U.S. stand manifested in the U.S. and British amendments to the draft memorandum. The Russian ambassador met with the secretary general on Friday following a working meeting between the French ambassador and Butrus-Ghali.

The Russians and the French sought to urge the secretary general to find compromise solutions, instead of adopting the U.S. and British amendments as part of the memorandum of understanding. The Iraqi side expressed its discontent at the General Secretariat's adoption of the U.S.-British amendments so that they would become UN proposals.

The Russians and the French insisted on the principle of "noninterference," urging the General Secretariat not to allow the U.S.-British interference to continue.

However, Russia and France admitted that any draft understanding on the conditions for implementing Resolution 986 requires U.S. approval.

The General Secretariat believes that a draft memorandum of understanding not approved by the United States would be of no use. This is why it is seeking U.S. approval before presenting the memorandum to the Security Council. The U.S. and British sides are aware that their approval of the draft memorandum is essential for its adoption, and that the secretary general cannot sign it until they are satisfied.

U.S. officials believe that what is required is Iraq's implementation of Resolution 986 to the letter, not a rewriting of the resolution in a manner that would grant the Iraqi Government political gains.

There were no indications of willingness on the U.S. side to make any radical change to the amendments, and the U.S. position insisted on the need for Iraq to submit to the conditions, while public U.S. statements pointed to an imminent agreement.

Iraqi sources said that the Americans proceed from the assumption that "they are in control of the situation," have "the upper hand," and believe what they are imposing will be accepted. The sources said that the U.S. stand has not changed. However, they pointed out that there is a hint that there is "room" for some give and take.

The secretary general will leave New York at the beginning of the week and is expected to return around 17 May, but it is not clear whether the Iraqi delegation will remain in New York to negotiate with the General Secretariat in Butrus-Ghali's absence or whether it will decide to conclude its fourth round and then begin the fifth after Butrus-Ghali's return.

Iraq: Cypriot Journal Fears Oil-for-Food Talks Facing 'Brick Wall'

NC1305113096 Paris AFP in English 1100 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nicosia, May 13 (AFP)—Iraq's oil-for-food negotiations with the United Nations are reaching a make-or-break point, the MIDDLE EAST ECONOMIC SURVEY (MEES) said here Monday [13 May].

If a solution is not reached within "the next 10 days ... [ellipsis as received] there is a risk that the talks may simply run into a brick wall of political paralysis," the Cyprus-based specialist weekly newsletter said.

"A make-or-break point is now in sight," it said. "It remains to be seen who blinks first, if anyone."

The two sides have since February been negotiating UN Security Council resolution 986 on allowing Iraq to export two billion dollars worth of oil for a renewable six-month period in order to buy food and medicine.

It said the "real problem" emerged at the end of the third round of talks last month when the United States and Britain proposed amendments to a memorandum of understanding reached between Iraqi and UN negotiators.

Iraq said US and British interference could scupper [scuttle] the talks.

The revisions focus on three areas, according to Western diplomats quoted by MEES.

— The first concerns effective control of the delivery of humanitarian supplies throughout Iraq to ensure equitable and universal distribution.

— The second has to do with the banking provisions. There must be no loophole that would allow the Iraqi regime to use the funds other than for the purchase of humanitarian supplies.

Washington and London want the Secretary General and not Baghdad to select the bank for Iraq's escrow account. Other points concern who issues and handles the letters of credit.

— The third concerns language in the memorandum of understanding that an oil-for-food deal is a one-time exception, and not a prelude to a lifting of the sanctions which were imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

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The UN negotiating team is using the US-British revisions as the basis for talks in the fourth round which began on May 6, it said.

The talks opened in February.

An Iraqi oil ministry official told AFP Monday [13 May] that Baghdad was capable of resuming oil exports as soon as a deal was reached. "The technical capacities and the state of the export terminals allow Iraq to resume crude exports immediately after an agreement with the United Nations is announced," he said asking not to be named.

Meanwhile, the head of the oil ministry's pipeline department, Salah 'Aziz, told AL-JUMHURIYAH that the pipelines leading to the terminals were "ready to function."

"Repair and maintenance work have finished in anticipation of a resumption of oil exports," 'Aziz said.

Iraq said in March that the Iraqi-Turkish pipeline to a Mediterranean terminal — through which most of the oil is to be sent — "was operational." It also said it has tested its Gulf terminal at Mina' al-Bakr.

The Cyprus-based MEES said last month that it would take Iraq two to three months to export oil after a deal is signed because the UN would first have to put its distribution infrastructure and logistics in place throughout Iraq.

Iraq: U.S., Britain Assailed for 'Hostility' Over UN Oil Talks

JN1205091096 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0757 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH asserts that the disgraceful and aggressive policy pursued by the United States and Britain against the Iraqi people to prolong the unfair embargo is no longer acceptable or condonable on the international scene.

In an article published today, the paper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds that the wicked, arrogant, and aggressive U.S. policy has prompted the international community to seriously explore the common denominators of a balanced policy. Moreover, the Security Council discussions on the exchange of oil for food, medicine, and other basic needs, which is being negotiated between Iraq and the United Nations, have conspicuously shown the hostility of both Washington and London toward the Iraqi people, who are suffering as a result of the continuation of the unfair sanctions.

The paper continues: Mankind felt threatened when the United States unilaterally controlled the destiny of the world's people and dominated the world body after the collapse of the former Soviet Union and after the "big powers" stepped aside to make room for an unprecedented arrogance on the international political scene. The U.S. Administration assembled all the NATO weapons to attack Iraq and impose an unfair embargo on its people.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: The reckless and unfair positions the United States and Britain have taken to inflict grievous harm on people, jeopardize their security, and cripple their potential have created chaos on the international scene and have adversely affected the work of the United Nations and its agencies.

Iraq: Albright Urged To End 'Hostility' Toward Saddam Regime

JN1105081396 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0650 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—AL-'IRAQ called on [Madeleine] Albright, U.S. representative to the UN Security Council, to rid herself of her hostility toward the people of Iraq and their leader, President Saddam Husayn. In an article written by Dr. Yasin Taha Zahir and published today, AL-'IRAQ says: Albright's statements reflect intransigent and hostile stands, not objective, factual stands. Her statements, the writer added, are part of the American-Zionist scheme against Iraq.

AL-'IRAQ adds: Each statement by the U.S. representative smacks of her hostility toward Iraq and Saddam Husayn. Albright's most recent statement to this effect was made on 5 May after the Security Council decided to extend the sanctions that are imposed on Iraq without any moral or legal justification.

AL-'IRAQ notes that Albright expresses only a political stand that is hostile to Iraq and its revolution. Her statements are based on the American stand and its aggressive strategy to control Iraq and impose U.S. hegemony on it, as well as to surround every other revolutionary system and the genuine leaders who seek to underscore their countries' independence and defend their revolutionary, progressive courses.

The paper adds that the U.S. stand against Iraq, as expressed by Albright, serves the Zionist role. The U.S. Administration wants to strengthen the nuclear and military capabilities of that role.

Iraq: 'Victory' Over 'American Cowboy' Predicted

JN1105090796 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0756 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH asserts that the entire world community is currently voicing a legitimate concern: that the American cowboy is the most dangerous enemy of mankind. He has committed crimes not committed by

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dictators, butchers, or demented rulers. Worse still, this cowboy is determined to burn the world.

The paper adds: Friends of the United States have not concealed their apprehension that they might someday face the fate of Gorbachev, who is viewed by the people of the former Soviet Union as a traitor who caused the dismemberment of the superpower that curbed the rabid U.S. frenzy.

The paper says: The dawn of freedom is approaching. Strugglers are uniting to deal painful blows to the U.S. beast. They are confident that victory is near, because the entire world is well aware that the U.S. beast has a "soft belly."

In an article published today, the paper says: The U.S. crimes in Iraq, Qana, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Afghanistan, Algeria, Eastern Europe, Sudan, Libya, and elsewhere are no longer debatable. Even friends of the United States have begun to whisper and make off-the-record statements about the terrorism, greed, and inhumanity of the American cowboy.

The paper adds: We in Iraq are at the forefront of the popular struggle for freedom and national dignity. We were the first to close the doors of our homeland to the U.S. "rabies." Our steadfastness was the catalyst that produced the awareness we are seeing in the world.

The paper continues: The armies that uphold freedom and justice are preparing for the great showdown. How splendid would it be if our crossing to safe shores, which is going on now, is coupled with similar crossings in other places. This is almost inevitable.

The paper concludes: Man, who was created by God to inhabit the earth, will triumph. Our victory is very imminent. The United States is well aware of this. That is why it is doing its utmost to avert the revocation of the sanctions, which is an impossible thing to do.

Iraq: 'Big Powers' Urged To Play More Active Role at UN

JN1205103096 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0630 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH says that lifting the embargo on the Iraqi people to the same degree that Iraq implements Security Council resolutions will be a significant development that will tangibly reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people.

In an article by chief editor Salah al-Mukhtar today, AL-JUMHURIYAH says that stating what is required of Iraq in the form of specific points will help expedite cooperation between Iraq and the United Nations and will solve the problems gradually, seriously, and without retractions. The paper emphasizes that the big powers should carefully verify all the information forwarded by the UN committees and should ask for conclusive evidence that prove this information is correct. This will remove some serious obstacles from the path of those who seek to lift the embargo and quickly end the tragedy of 20 million Iraqis.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says: We need to make sure that the good intentions of the big powers that have no interest in annihilating millions of Iraqis do not get confused with the evil schemes of annihilation carried out by the United States and the United Kingdom in the name of the United Nations. It is high time for the big powers to play a more active and effective role in ending the Iraqi people's suffering. These states have several cards they can use. Moreover, the international and regional state of affairs is now very conducive for lifting the embargo.

The paper points out that the Iraqi people can no longer be as forgiving as they have been in the past and their intellectuals, key figures, and main forces can no longer accept the justifications some groups have advanced to relieve themselves of responsibility. As time passes, the paper says, thousands of Iraqis are killed. The responsibility for this crime lies not only with the one who pulls the trigger. Those who accept the decision to kill and those who do nothing to prevent it, even though they can, should also be held accountable.

The paper asks the permanent members of the UN Security Council: Have you forgotten that the veto is your right as much as it is the right of the United States? Why are you not using it? We can hear the accusations you exchange with the United States when the matter has to do with everyday interests, but you stand silent when it comes to the annihilation of the Iraqi people?

AL-JUMHURIYAH says: We hope the leaders of Europe and of other states will not forget that the lifting of the embargo is imminent and that it will be lifted through the help of God, the steadfastness of the Iraqis, and the support of the honorable people who have already begun to dig the grave of the U.S. monster. The embargo will be lifted without your help. What do you expect from a people who have lost 1.25 million human beings and endured suffering that no other people in history have experienced? Do you expect them to smile at you tomorrow?

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Iraq: SAIRI Leader Urges Army Action Against Saddam

JN1105205296 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1745 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah al-Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], said that the phenomenon of the [Iraqi] officers' defection to neighboring states and to the liberated areas is a clear expression of the political separation between the army and the regime.

In a statement to the Voice of Rebellious Iraq, his eminence said that the officers and military commanders are aware that the tyrant Saddam harbors grudge against the army, which is the direct reason for the deteriorating military situation. The tyrant is responsible for what happened in the wars with Iran and Kuwait, he added.

Al-Hakim said that a large number of officers sent messages to his eminence emphasizing their readiness to carry out a military action against the regime. The officers also expressed their full separation from the tyrant's regime, he added.

Al-Hakim pointed to his previous proposal on the need for cooperation and coordination between the army and the armed popular organizations operating inside Iraq. He asserted that the current phase requires carrying out a practical move that will crown the past phases and developments in the relationship between the army and the people.

Regarding SAIRI's position on the defection of officers and commanders from Iraq, his eminence said: The sincere officers are urged to work zealously inside Iraq within cells and formations in cooperation with the Islamic organizations. This is the best way for the interest of Iraq.

He asserted that a change must be made from inside Iraq. His eminence urged the Iraqi Army to seize the opportunity represented by the regime's weakness and isolation to carry out a joint action that will satisfy Almighty God and rescue our people from the claws of the criminal Saddamist regime.

Iraq: Saddam Reportedly Orders 40 Officers Executed

JN1105090196 Amman AL-URDUN in Arabic 13 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed security sources said that 40 officers in the Iraqi Army and security forces were executed by a firing squad less than two weeks ago at the direct order of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn. The sources added that 'Udayy, Saddam Husayn's elder son, personally supervised the execution of the officers, some of whom held high ranks. The sources said that some of the Iraqi officers who were executed were relatives of the Iraqi president himself.

Iraq: Opposition Radio Reports More Prisoners Executed

NC1005164796 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The regime's dictatorial authorities recently executed another group of detainees [words indistinct]. According to reliable sources in Baghdad, most of these new victims were detained in various areas of Iraq in the wake of the March 1991 uprising.

The sources added that the authorities have not informed the victims' families of their execution even though more than one month has passed since it was carried out.

The tyrant Saddam's regime periodically eliminates large numbers of detainees despite numerous protests from the United Nations and international human rights organizations.

An earlier criminal operation of this sort occurred in the Ra's Abu Gharib prison near Baghdad when the oppressive authorities executed hundreds of Iraqi prisoners on charges of [words indistinct] the March uprising.

According to an accurate field study by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the reduced population growth in Iraq was not just because of the lack of food and medicine, but also because of the mass executions carried out by the regime.

Iraq: Citizens Reported Fleeing to Jordan in Large Numbers

NC1005163596 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to informed Jordanian sources, large numbers of Iraqis are flooding into Jordan illegally, crossing the border by various routes.

The Iraqi opposition newspaper NIDA' AL-RAFIDAYN quotes other press reports as saying that some Iraqis without personal documents have turned themselves over to Jordanian border posts to avoid paying the departure tax levied by Saddam Husayn's authorities on Iraqi citizens who wish to travel abroad. Most citizens are unable to pay this tax.

The newspaper said that Jordan's acceptance of these people who flee the tyrant Saddam's hell marks a new

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stage in the deterioration of relations between the two countries.

Iraq: Republican Guard Troops Said Deployed on Road to Jordan

NC1005153796 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] (?Travelers from Amman say) Saddam Husayn's Republican Guard troops have been deployed along the length of the international highway leading to Iraq's border with Jordan. Units of these forces are stationed on both sides of the road in a conspicuous and [word indistinct] way. The reports say these forces are equipped with heavy armaments, antiaircraft guns, tanks, and military transporters. These measures follow the deterioration of Jordan's relations with Saddam's regime and increasing popular resentment in the west of the country.

Iraq: Barzani Speaks on Turkish, PKK 'Dispute'

JN1105202796 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] After concluding his visit to Syria and a tour of the Dahuk Governorate, leader Mas'ud Barzani arrived in Salah-al-Din at 1400 on 11 May. He was given a wide popular reception from the Dahuk Governorate to Salah-al-Din.

On the third day of his stay in Dahuk, leader Barzani visited on 10 May the citizens of the villages which were the targets of the recent shelling of the Turkish Army from (Zawita) to (Kanimas) district. His excellency was received by the citizens of the area who hoisted yellow flags.

On his arrival in Kanimas, the masses gathered carrying wreaths of yellow flowers and cheered joyously upon seeing him. After a short rest, his excellency delivered a short speech to the packed masses in which he said: I thank you for your presence dear people. You played a well-known role in September and [word indistinct] revolutions. After the uprising, the reconstruction of Kurdistan was carried out somehow, but it was regrettable that (Barwari) continued to suffer from difficult living conditions.

His excellency said: I was in Syria when I heard the news about the Turkish shelling of your area. This was the first time that the area was the target of shelling. We have tried hard to prevent the Turks and the PKK [Kurdistan Workers Party] from settling their problems in the area and from making our area an arena for their conflicts, because we are not party to this dispute. Therefore, we say that it is impossible to remain silent toward this violation. Both the PKK and Turkey should know that this people have an authority, and that injustice can no longer be acceptable.

His excellency added: I frankly say to you—and I want Turkey, the PKK, and the whole world to hear me—that we can never accept for them to make our area an arena for their wars any more [words indistinct] to settle their accounts so that they will get rid of their problems while our people will be harmed and displaced. This is unacceptable, both from the Turks and from the PKK. Regardless of the price, we will not allow the continuation of these aggressions. I say frankly that either stability and peace return to your area or else we will not leave the sources of aggression in peace. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Turkish Envoy Summoned Over Troops, Airspace Incursions

JN1205082596 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—This morning, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Turkish charge d'affaires in Baghdad and handed him a memorandum expressing Iraq's strong protest over the Turkish troops' violations of Iraqi territory and airspace on 6 May to conduct military operations on the pretext of pursuing Turkish Kurdish separatists. These incursions are a flagrant violation of the rules of international law, the provisions of the UN Charter, and neighborliness.

The memorandum demanded that the Turkish Armed Forces immediately withdraw from Iraqi territory and refrain from repeating such violations. It also asserted Iraq's legitimate right to demand compensation for the losses sustained by the Iraqi Kurds as a result of the incursions.

Iraq: Radio on Jordan King's Visit to Air Base, 'Provocative' Sorties

JN1105182496 Baghdad Mother of Battles Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jordan's King Husayn visited the al-Azraq Air Base today. He inspected the U.S. fighter planes at the base following joint air maneuvers with Jordanian pilots. King Husayn was briefed on the capabilities of the F-16 and F-15 aircraft which participated in training at the air base which is located 75 kilometers east of Amman.

Thirty-four U.S. aircraft were deployed in Jordan on 13 April to carry out provocative sorties over Iraq from Jordan.

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Israel: Peres — Intifadah Leaflets 'Illegal'

TA1305093696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres says the dissemination of leaflets calling for intifadah concurrently with the permanent status negotiations is illegal, and that the matter will be investigated at once.

Replying to a question as to whether yesterday's incidents in Lebanon constitute a violation of the new understandings, Peres said the matter is marginal, and will be looked into at the follow-up committee meeting in Washington tomorrow. Our correspondent Nisim Qeynan reports that the prime minister made these remarks during a tour of Ofaqim.

Israel: Peres Condemns 'Intervention' by Terrorist Groups, Iran

BR1305112296 Hilversum Nederland-1 Television Network in Dutch 1800 GMT 10 May 96

[Interview with Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres by Eddo Rosenthal; place and date not given—recorded, in English]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Anchorwoman Pia Dijkstra] Prime Minister Peres was scheduled to receive one of the For Freedom Awards in Middelburg [Netherlands] tomorrow. However, he will not attend in person. In view of the tense situation in Israel, he wants to remain there, among other things, because he is in the middle of an election campaign.

[Rosenthal] Prime Minister Peres has given an interview to the Netherlands television company regarding the award he is to receive in Middelburg tomorrow. Mr. Peres, the security situation and the terror attacks have caused that you don't go to Holland. This means that the antipeace camp succeeded in interfering in your agenda.

[Peres] That is so, yes. I think there is a great misunderstanding. Some people think that Israel took a more hawkish position because of the elections. But that is not the story. The story is that there is an intervention by different terroristic organizations and Iran to bring an end to the peace process. And they think that in order to do so they have to throw bombs and katyushas over Israel, particularly before the elections.

[Rosenthal] And that's the reason that you are not going to Holland?

[Peres] I am not going because we are really on the last steps of the elections and my hands are full because I got every day another warning and every day another demand and I have to be on the spot in order to handle the most complicated issues.

Israel: Sources Say al-Asad Orders Calm To Help Peres Win Elections

TA1205074696 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew 12 May 96 p 1

[Report by Dan Avidan, Drora Perl, and Arye Dayan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Arab diplomatic sources told DAVAR RISHON yesterday that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has instructed Hizballah and Islamic Palestinian terrorist groups not to carry out attacks in Israel on the eve of the elections. The sources asserted that al-Asad has adopted this tactic in order to help Shim'on Peres and the Labor Party win the elections. [passage omitted]

Israel: 'Secret' Accord Said Reached With Turkey on Missiles

JN1205124196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut — European diplomatic circles revealed a secret agreement between Turkey and Israel to produce medium- to long-range missiles. In a report, AL-KIFAH AL-'ARABI weekly said that Turkey will finance more than 80 percent of the cost of the project, which will not only provide an adequate missile arsenal for both sides, but will also allow for some of these missiles to be exported to NATO states and other countries. The magazine said that Israeli experts have frequently complained that Israel's geographic area, as opposed to an area like Turkey, does not allow for accurate missile tests to be carried out.

Israel: Intelligence Sources—Iran Seeking Control of South Lebanon

TA1205082496 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew 12 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Intelligence sources have said that Iran is making an effort to rebuild south Lebanon and gain the sympathy of the local residents.

Hizballah has stepped up its activities in south Lebanon over the past several days. On 10 May, it again planted a bomb in the Jazzin enclave north of the security zone. It exploded, wounding an SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldier who died of his wounds while being evacuated to a hospital in Israel.

"While being busy with the rehabilitation process, Hizballah is trying to prove that its power to operate in the area has not diminished," IDF [Israel Defense Forces] sources said. It is believed that in the coming days, the security zone will return to the routine war of attrition that includes planting explosive charges and attacks on IDF and SLA posts. "Hizballah will

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try to examine the flexibility of the understandings of Operations Grapes of Wrath and their implementation on the ground," the military sources said.

Numerous construction works can be observed in villages north of the security zone. Intelligence sources said that Iran is funneling large sums of money into the area and is conducting reconstruction works because roads, telephone networks, and electricity grids were badly harmed. "Iran is filling the vacuum left by the Lebanese Government and taking the place of the Lebanese administration," the intelligence sources said. "Iran expects to buy the sympathy of the residents of the region and establish its control over southern Lebanon with its money."

Israel: 5 Soldiers Wounded in Lebanon; Opposition Reacts

TA1205095296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Five IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers were wounded this morning in an incident near Sujud in the eastern sector of south Lebanon's security zone. One soldier was seriously wounded, two others sustained moderate injuries, and the remaining two were lightly wounded. Our correspondent Ilan Ro'e reports that the wounded troops were evacuated to Israel by helicopter.

As for the circumstances of the incident, our correspondent notes that at approximately 0800 [0500 GMT] this morning, an IDF patrol moving along the Sujud-al-Rayhan road was hit when a roadside charge suddenly exploded nearby.

Immediately after the incident, IDF and SLA [South Lebanese Army] artillery began to heavily shell terrorist targets north of the security zone. The terrorists fired back. The soldier with serious wounds was hospitalized at Haifa's Rambam Hospital. [passage omitted]

At this morning's weekly cabinet session, the ministers were briefed on the incident. An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] spokesman reports that approximately one hour ago, Israel Air Force [IAF] jets raided terrorist targets in Jabal Safi, which is situated in the same sector of the security zone. The pilots reported accurate strikes against their targets. All our planes returned safely to their base.

The five soldiers wounded in the incident were hospitalized at Haifa's Rambam Hospital. Our correspondent Shuli Sheinwald reports that two of the soldiers are in moderate condition after being struck by shrapnel. One of the two was hit in the chest and stomach and the other in his arms and legs. The soldier who was hit in the stomach is now being operated on. The other three soldiers were lightly wounded in their legs by shrapnel. [passage omitted]

The opposition has already reacted to the incident in the north. Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan said that the incident proves that the new understandings in Lebanon give Hizballah an offensive advantage while the IDF is forced to hunker down in defensive positions and sustain casualties. Moledet leader Rehav'am Ze'evi said that the agreement of understandings has been proved worthless since it permits Hizballah to continue striking at IDF and SLA personnel. Peres should admit that he squandered Operation Grapes of Wrath and misled the people, Ze'evi said.

Israel: IDF—Hizballah Did Not Violate Cease-Fire Understandings

TA1205182096 Jerusalem Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 12 May 96

[Video report by army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] said that Hizballah did not violate the latest understandings in today's incident in Lebanon, which was the fifth since the agreement reached under U.S. mediation. In response, Israeli aircraft bombed Hizballah targets. Our army affairs correspondent Roni Daniyel reports:

[Begin Daniyel recording] Today's incident, the fifth since the cease-fire, is yet another attempt by Hizballah to test the new rules. The firing was not carried out from inside villages but from these hills. It definitely pains us to the same extent, but it shows that Hizballah, as least for the present, is making sure that it does not operate from inside villages for fear of IDF reaction.

Following this morning's shelling, Israeli Air Force planes attacked Hizballah targets in Jabal Safi, near the village of al-'Awza'i, in other words, targets that are not directly tied to this morning's Hizballah firing in order to signal that we are not restricted in our reaction. All the activity is being conducted within the understandings reached following Operation Grapes of Wrath. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Israel: Baraq Sees No Accord Violation in Lebanon; Likud Disagrees

TA1305052196 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq says that yesterday's incident in south Lebanon does not constitute a violation of the understandings of Operation

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Grapes of Wrath. If we learn that the terrorist squad was operating out of a village, we will act in accordance with the understandings, Baraq said, adding that the Air Force has meanwhile bombed Lebanese targets without incurring any retaliation from the terrorists.

The Likud, however, says that the Operation Grapes of Wrath understandings have failed. Binyamin Netanyahu calls for introducing a new security policy that will guarantee that Hizballah is incapable of using south Lebanon to operate against the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and against Israeli civilians.

Israel: Savir on Lebanon Incident, Hebron Redeployment

TA1205181496 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 May 96

[Interview with Uri Savir, Israeli Foreign Ministry director general, by correspondent Shlomo Ganor on 12 May; place not given — recorded, in Hebrew with Arabic subtitles; translated from the Hebrew]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ganor] Mr. Savir, following today's incident in South Lebanon in which five IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers were wounded, how does Jerusalem view the violation of the agreement?

[Savir] First, in that agreement, we wanted to maintain the IDF's freedom of action and reaction, which did not exist beforehand. In today's response by the Air Force and the IDF we showed that we have that capability. Second, we insisted that Syria restrain Hizballah, and Syria will have to do that if it wants to uphold the agreements. Third, there might be some misunderstanding: We are not looking for a cease-fire with the terrorists or an agreement with Hizballah. We will fight Hizballah without our hands tied. That is why within the framework of the agreements, we now have more opportunities to restrain Hizballah politically and to take military action, which will be tested in the coming days. It has already withstood the test through the IDF's response.

[Ganor] To what extent will today's incident influence the talks to set up the monitoring team?

[Savir] I think that the monitoring committee will be able to help if Syria is serious about restraining Hizballah. We will regard the very structure of the monitoring committee and its activities as an attempt to restrain and stabilize a very complex situation in Lebanon and as a basis for peace negotiations, which is the only solution for the Lebanon problem.

[Ganor] Mr. Savir, in reference to the agreement you reached with the Palestinians on the redeployment in Hebron, what is the agreement?

[Savir] We and the Palestinian Authority [PA] are aware of the sensitivity of Hebron's security problem. Therefore, for the good of both sides and security we agreed that: 1) There would be full implementation of the agreement; 2) there would be preparations for the security facet between Israel and the PA — which is happening; there is another meeting tonight, and there will be further meetings — so that the PA can take control of those Hebron areas that are its responsibility, following meticulous preparations and proper overlapping; 3) there would be joint activity in order to hand over the civilian powers in Hebron; and 4) negotiations would be held to set up a larger international presence than currently exists. After these preparations are implemented, the redeployment will be carried out. The joint Israeli-Palestinian assessment is that it will take about one month.

[Ganor] Does that mean after the Israeli elections?

[Savir] A month from now means after the Israeli elections.

Israel: Paper on Hebron Presented; Ultra-Orthodox Receive Housing Grant

TA1205160596 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 May 96

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Shim'on Peres made a formal announcement at the cabinet meeting this morning: Hebron will be evacuated only after the elections, as there is no need to provoke unrest on either the Jewish or Arab side at this time. Negotiation coordinator Uri Savir, who was also at the meeting, presented a written paper drafted in his talks with Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. The paper states that the Hebron redeployment will be carried out no later than a month after the two sides finalize the modalities of the redeployment, taking the security situation into consideration. The meaning is clear: It will be a phased process.

Meanwhile, preparations are being made. Norwegian observers are arriving, and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the Palestinian Police will have overlapping control until the evacuation, which will take place after 29 May.

Meretz is apparently opposed to the same arrangement that was acceptable to 'Arafat. Minister Yosi Sarid assailed the arrangement, saying: Each day prolonging the status quo in Hebron and the settlement of [Rabbi] Levinger is unnecessary and dangerous.

Another issue on which Sarid attacked the very government to which he belongs was today's decision to

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allocate 11 million shekels toward the construction of the ultra-Orthodox settlement of Qiryat Sefer. Sarid charged: It is a political bribe; it is a pity that the government is becoming an election campaign headquarters. Construction and Housing Minister Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer replied that the government was merely carrying out an old pledge made by Yitzhaq Rabin. [passage omitted]

Israel: Night Curfew Imposed on Town in Hebron Area

TA1205162796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has imposed a night curfew for a week on the northern part of the township of Halhul, which is in the Hebron region. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the IDF decided to impose the curfew because of the many cases of stone throwing and disturbances in Halhul recently.

The Norwegian observers are due to deploy in Hebron on 14 May if the technical coordination problems with Israel are resolved. Norway's foreign minister is due in Israel on that day in order to observe the operation of the observers force in Hebron from close up.

The commander of the Central Command has extended by three months the restriction orders imposed on settlers David Shir'el of Tall al-Rumaythah and Shmu'el Sitrin of Qiryat Arba'.

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Jordan: King Comments on Joint Jordanian-U.S. Maneuvers

JN1105135996 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn today visited the site of the joint Jordanian-U.S. military maneuvers and attended the conclusion of Operation Eager Tiger at the Martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base in al-Azraq. His majesty was briefed on the phases of the military exercise. He reviewed the U.S. planes participating in the exercise and was briefed on their technical and combat capabilities. More details from our correspondent Jawad al-'Umari:

[Begin recording] His Majesty King Husayn expressed satisfaction with the results of the joint Jordanian-U.S. military exercises, which provided an opportunity to access modern technology. Noting cooperation between Jordan and the United States, King Husayn said: It is a friendly country, with whom we had conducted maneuvers in the past. He added that this exercise was one of the best of these maneuvers, noting that the U.S. side was also satisfied with the results.

King Husayn reaffirmed his pride in our brave eagles, the pilots of the Royal Jordanian Air Force, adding that this exercise was an opportunity to test and improve what we have and that the results were satisfactory for all. King Husayn said the joint exercises will end on the set date, adding that more than half the time has passed.

Answering a question on the city of Jerusalem and the holy places, his majesty said he explained the Jordanian stand on this matter at his news conference a few days ago with his brother His Excellency Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. His majesty the king reiterated that it is not an issue of turning over the holy places to a certain state, a certain side, or to the supervision of a certain person, because the holy places belong to the three monotheistic religions. He added that these must be above the sovereignty of any state or any side, noting that they also should be a symbol of peace among the worshipers of the three monotheistic religions.

Regarding the holy city, his majesty said that West Jerusalem is the capital of Israel although we will not recognize this before the issue is finally resolved. East Jerusalem, the king added, is an occupied Arab city. Negotiations over East Jerusalem will take place in the final stage and the PLO will carry out its duty within this framework.

Regarding the Cairo summit which will begin tomorrow, his majesty said: As far as we are concerned, we support our Palestinian brothers with our utmost. Our only objective is to help them carry out their duties and restore their rights over their national soil. The king said: The Cairo summit falls within the framework of coordination to review the developments and situation. God willing, all the results will be good.

King Husayn arrived at Martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base in al-Azraq area at 1000 today. He was received by His Royal Highness Prince Faysal Bin-al-Husayn, the chief of staff of the Royal Air Force, King Husayn's Military Adviser Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, and the commander of the Air Base. The king was briefed on the joint Jordanian-U.S. military exercises, and toured the base. [end recording]

Jordan: TV Reports on King's Tour of 'Eager Tiger' Exercise

JN1105200096 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 May 96

[Video report by Kassab Samawi]

[FBIS Translated Text] The joint Eager Tiger tactical exercise, which ended at the Martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base in al-Azraq region today, is an important part of the joint exercises between the Royal Jordanian Air Force [RJAF] and the U.S. Air Force. The exercise was a great success in terms of benefiting the joint experience of the two sides and raising the combat and technical preparedness of the RJAF. His Majesty King Husayn, supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, paid an inspection visit to the site of these exercises today.

His majesty was accompanied by His Highness Prince Faysal Bin-Husayn and His Highness Talal Bin-Muhammad, his majesty the king's military secretary. His majesty the king was welcomed upon arrival by the RJAF commander; General Bill Looney, the commander of participating U.S. force; the commander of the Martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base; and the U.S. charge d'affaires in Amman.

His majesty the king watched the take-off of Jordanian and U.S. planes taking part in the Eager Tiger joint tactical exercise. Eighteen U.S. F-16's, 12 F-15's, four air refueling planes, and an AWACS plane took part in the exercise. Also taking part in the tactical exercise was a group of RJAF F-5 and Mirage jet fighters.

Afterward, his majesty the supreme commander visited the U.S. deployment force's command headquarters and air operations center. General William Looney, the commander of the U.S. force, briefed his majesty on the tasks and duties of the U.S. force in Jordan and the joint exercises with the RJAF during the specified period of these forces' presence in Jordan.

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This exercise is one of the largest Jordanian-U.S. military exercises. It provided the two sides with a good opportunity to benefit from each other's experiences on the ground. It was also an opportunity for familiarization with the modern technologies in all that concerns air operations and joint operations. This exercise also comes within the preparations for the delivery of modern U.S. F-16's to Jordan.

During His Majesty King Husayn's tour of the Martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti Air Base, his majesty inspected an F-16 and an F-15. He was briefed on their technical and combat capabilities. His majesty also met with the RJAF hawks of the first combat squadron. He voiced appreciation for their efforts and high efficiency.

On the importance of these joint exercises, Gen. Bill Looney, the commander of the U.S. force, said:

[Begin Looney recording, in English with Arabic subtitles] As far as the relationship bolstering between Jordan and the United States, it is a good, tremendous opportunity. We are going to be here for three months. We have been flying ever since we got here the 1st [corrects himself] 12th of April, I believe it was. And we have flown numerous sorties with the Jordanians. The Jordanians have flown with us as a team of like F-1's and F-15's against the F-16's and the F-5's, and we have changed that. So we do a lot of work, back and forth. We brief and then they will debrief. Also in addition to that, a lot of our ground personnel are working together in all phases, whether it is in support of the aircraft, the dining hall, putting together civil engineering things to run the tent city that we all live in and those types of things. So it has been a tremendous opportunity for us to share professional knowledge of the various jobs that we have and impart different skills. So it has been fantastic in that regard. [end recording]

Thus, the Eager Tiger operation, which ended here today within the framework of the joint military Jordanian-U.S. exercises, achieved the set and preplanned objectives in bolstering the relations of friendship between the two countries, especially in the field of military cooperation.

Jordan: King Husayn Remarks on Joint Exercises, Lebanon, Iraq

JN1105164996 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] His Majesty King Husayn, supreme commander of the Jordanian Armed Forces, expressed satisfaction with the results of the joint exercises between the Jordanian Armed Forces and U.S. Forces. This was noted by his majesty the king this morning when he visited the exercises site and attended part of the final day of the Eager Tiger Operation, which was carried out by Jordanian and U.S. pilots within the joint training program. U.S. F-16 and F-15 planes and an early warning AWACS plane took part in the training program. His majesty the supreme commander made statements to reporters. [passage omitted]

Regarding the Jordanian stand on the situation in Lebanon, his majesty said:

[Begin recording] We hope that Lebanese sovereignty will be restored to the entire Lebanese territory and that Lebanon will exercise its sovereignty over all its territory. We support Lebanon's independence, freedom, and sovereignty. [end recording]

On Iraq, his majesty said that his stand and Jordan's stand on Iraq is known. No country has offered the Iraqi people more than Jordan, he said. His majesty hoped that the suffering of the Iraqi people would come to an end. [passage omitted]

Jordan: King Remarks on Iraq, Jerusalem at News Conference

JN1105190096 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 11 May 96

[Statements by King Husayn of Jordan to correspondents at the Jordanian Air Force Muwaffaq al-Salti Base in al-Azraq on 11 May; italicized passages in English — recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Jordan Television correspondent Kassab Samawi] Your Majesty: The development of the Armed Forces has always been a dear and noble objective of his majesty the king. You now see this experience materializing on the ground in cooperation with a friendly state like the United States. What would you say on this occasion?

[Husayn] First, I am very satisfied with this exercise and its results. I am also satisfied with the opportunities this process provided in terms of learning about modern technology and in terms of cooperation. As you have said, the United States is a friendly country and we had joint exercises with it in the past. This is one of the biggest exercises, which is also an experience for them and they are satisfied about its results. Additionally, our young men are a source of pride and this was an opportunity for us to test everything we have and to improve as much as we can. Praise be God, all the results are satisfactory.

[Unidentified correspondent] Your Majesty: What is your reaction to [Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on] Peres' statements last week in which he said that some Arab leaders do not wish to see the holy places, especially

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in Hebron and Jerusalem, handed over to President 'Arafat?

[Husayn] What has this to do with what we are now talking about [laughter]? We are talking about one thing, you are talking about something else. [laughter and commotion]

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty: Tell us how do you feel about the exercises. Are you pretty satisfied with the exercises?*

[Husayn] *I am very, very satisfied. I think it's been a wonderful opportunity to see young people — American, Jordanian, and other brethren from the area — together at this place and at this time. I think the exercise has proved to be a great success to everyone concerned. And, after all, we are all allies and friends and it has afforded us an opportunity to learn more and to get to know each other, and to get to experience in reality the exposure to all that we have and all that is modern. And, I am very very happy indeed with the atmosphere that has prevailed. And I think that all our pilots share with me the same feelings, and we are always proud of that.*

[Correspondent] *Your Majesty: Many of your subjects are unhappy with this exercise and feel that Jordan is being used as a base against Iraq. Can you comment on that please?*

[Husayn] *First of all, my position and the position of Jordan regarding Iraq is well known. I think no country has done more for the Iraqi people than Jordan has, and no country wishes to see an end to the nightmare that is Iraq of today than Jordan does. But this exercise has nothing to do with Iraq in any form or way in terms of any of the suggestions that had been made by some. And when you say Jordanians, I think they are probably the people you talk about, and I think they are the minority and the overwhelming majority know that we and the United States are friends and have always been friends and we are always proud of the fact that we exchange, as friends, knowledge and we work together. And this has provided an opportunity for young people to get together at their very best levels and to learn and work in a way that is commendable.*

[Jordan Television Correspondent Kassab Samawi] Your Majesty: There are questions on the duration of the U.S. troops' stay in this region and if there will be any more joint exercises in the future?

[Husayn] We have a record of joint exercises with friendly states. We have covered more than half the time of this particular exercise and it will be over on the scheduled date, which was set in advance. [King turns to the correspondent who asked the question on the holy places in Hebron and Jerusalem] Regarding your question, madam, do you want me to answer in Arabic or English?

[Correspondent] In Arabic, please?

[Husayn] Okay. I think I answered this question during the news conference I had with brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak a few days ago. The question is not that of turning over the holy places to a certain state or party or to the supervision of a certain individual. I think if we go back to history, and if we are realistic and wish this to be the end of the problems between the subjects of God, the People of the Book [Muslims, Christians, and Jews], then the holy places that belong to the three heavenly messages must have a special status, and they must be above the sovereignty of any state or party. Otherwise, we will enter into the same whirlpool again. At the same time, they must be a symbol of peace among the subjects of God, the followers of the three heavenly messages. This is our position as regards these sites. As for Jerusalem, West Jerusalem has always been a capital for Israel, although we will not recognize this until a final solution is found to this issue. East Jerusalem is Arab and occupied. In the final stages of the talks and the negotiations, in which the PLO is fulfilling its duty and role — a role that was strengthened by the results of the recent elections in the Palestinian territory in the West Bank and Gaza which also strengthened the ability of the Palestinian negotiator — we hope that Jerusalem will become a symbol of peace between the Palestinians and Israelis as regards the rights of the two parties there.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: You will leave tomorrow for Cairo to attend a three-way summit. What would your majesty say about this summit, and would it mark the beginning of a larger Arab meeting?

[Husayn] Sir, as far as we are concerned, we will support our Palestinian brothers to the best of our abilities and resources. This is the reality. We have no objective other than to enable them — with the utmost of our ability and resources — to fulfill their duty and regain their rights on their national soil. This new meeting falls within the context of coordination and will seek to review the developments and circumstances and, God willing, it will produce good results. I expect this to be the case.

[Correspondent] Your Majesty: How do you react to the plea made by Michel 'Awn [exiled former Lebanese Army commander] to you and to Presidents Mubarak and 'Arafat to work on evacuating all non-Lebanese forces from Lebanon? What kind of support will the Cairo summit...?

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[Husayn, interrupting] (?You make your questions in) [words indistinct] and smart [laughter and commotion]. But let me tell you once again about our position on Lebanon. We hope that Lebanese sovereignty will be restored to the entire Lebanese territory and that Lebanon will exercise its sovereignty over all its territory. We support Lebanon's independence and freedom and the elimination of any foreign presence on its territory?

[Correspondent] What kind of support will the Cairo summit give to the Palestinians, especially in the final stages of the peace talks?

[Husayn] We have not met yet. We will meet tomorrow, God willing.

Jordan: Prime Minister, Others Accompany King to Cairo Summit

JN1205090396 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn left the homeland for Cairo this morning at the head of the Jordanian delegation to the tripartite summit between his majesty, Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian National Authority President Yasir 'Arafat, which will be held in Cairo today.

His majesty is accompanied by Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti; Ahmad al-Lawzi, president of the Senate; Sa'd Hayil al-Surur, speaker of the House of Representatives; 'Awn al-Khasawinah, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court; His Highness Prince Talal Bin Muhammad, his majesty's military secretary; and Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, minister of information. [passage omitted]

Jordan: AL-RA'Y Views 'Positive Results' of Tripartite Summit

JN1305094396 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 13 May 96 p 25

[Editorial: "Cairo Summit...Positive Results, Response to Aspirations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The results of the Cairo tripartite summit constitute the beginning of a new stage in the nation's march toward restoring solidarity. These results are represented in fixed dates for holding further meetings, staying away from the policy of axes which prevailed in the Arab political arena after the Gulf war, and the positive atmosphere of the summit that led to positive results.

What is important here is that the results were identical with the Jordanian concept concerning the need to eliminate all obstacles facing the peace process. This is because reaching the aspired objectives is basic in the Jordanian political efforts aimed at realizing the hoped-for just, comprehensive, and true peace in which each party respects the rights of others and at the same time commits itself to its duties and applies the principle on whose basis the peace process was launched since the Madrid conference; namely, land-for-peace.

His Majesty King Husayn reiterated the Jordanian position, which views Jerusalem as an occupied Arab territory that the Palestinians seek to restore in implementation of one of the most important bases of peacemaking, which is the inadmissibility of the usurpation of land by force. He also reiterated that any idea about an alternative homeland aims at confusing the Jordanian-Palestinian relations. His majesty thus demonstrated a position based on our belief that there is no alternative to the Palestinian leadership, which was elected by the Palestinian people and which receives very strong Jordanian support in its battle to restore the rights and build the independent Palestinian state. These assurances put a firm end to any wrong or tendentious interpretations of the Jordanian position and to assure the Palestinian brothers that Amman will always be their strong supporter, their open gate to the world, and their backer in difficult times.

While highly appreciating the results of the Cairo summit, we hope with all sincerity, and in view of the pan-Arab aspirations we hold, that these results will be a good beginning and a factor in the reconstruction of a bastion of Arab integration and solidarity that is capable of responding to the requirements of the stage and confronting the fast international developments and the regional developments whose results we are always the first to face.

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Lebanon: Iranian Minister Meets al-Hirawi, al-Hariri, Comments

NC1005123596 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abbas Akhondi, Iranian minister of cooperatives and housing, today visited President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri. In a statement at the B'abda Palace, Akhondi stressed that the main goal of his visit is to coordinate with Lebanon regarding Iranian aid to rebuild the property destroyed by Israeli aggression. He said that he conveyed a message from the Iranian president to President al-Hirawi. He noted that the message stressed that Iran will stand by Lebanon in all difficult situations.

Akhondi disclosed that Mohamad Kazem Khonsari, director of the Middle East desk at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, will remain in Lebanon to follow up on measures regarding the aid that Iran will offer to Lebanon.

After meeting Prime Minister al-Hariri, Akhondi stressed Iran's readiness to help Lebanon in the reconstruction process. He noted that agreement was reached with al-Hariri to activate the Iranian-Lebanese cooperation committee as quickly as possible.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri 'Believes' in Peace Despite Grapes of Wrath

NC1005123796 Paris AFP in English 1135 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, May 10 (AFP) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said he still believes in the Middle East peace process despite Israel's 17-day war on Hizballah but warned the Jewish state has lost credibility in the Arab world.

"We still believe in peace, even after this unjust war against an unarmed population," al-Hariri told AFP in an interview late Thursday [9 May].

"What is the alternative to peace? Disaster. The principal of peace remains," the prime minister said.

Al-Hariri, however, pointed out the physical and psychological scars left by Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath last month against the Iranian-backed Hizballah in Lebanon which killed 174 people, almost all civilians.

"Israel's credibility and reputation are no longer the same, and Israel must make very serious efforts to convince Arabs, particularly the Lebanese, that it really wants peace," he said.

"Israel will also have a lot of difficulty in normalizing relations with all Arab countries," once peace is concluded, al-Hariri predicted. "A normalization is not imposed by decree, you have to convince people."

Israel and Syria launched peace talks in October 1991 and they include the issue of Lebanon, where both countries have troops. But the negotiations have made little progress and are currently frozen.

Describing Israel as the "big loser" in its war on Hizballah, al-Hariri said this operation has "provided further proof that there is not a military solution but only a political one" in the Middle East.

"Peace is a strategic choice that can only be called into question by this aggression," he said.

Israel launched the operation against Hizballah after the guerrilla group rocketed its northern territory. Hizballah has spearheaded attacks against Israel to drive it out of an occupied "security zone" in south Lebanon.

Al-Hariri said that he expects Lebanon to be back on its feet in five to six months from the estimated 500 million dollars in damages caused by the Israeli attacks.

Lebanon: Buwayz Criticizes Israeli Reaction to UN Report on Qana

NC1005163996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has received a written message from his French counterpart, Herve de Charette. French Ambassador to Lebanon Jean-Pierre La Fond handed the message over. In his letter La Fond stresses France's determination to contribute effectively to implementing the April understanding and its readiness to make every effort to achieve a fair and permanent peace in the Middle East.

In a statement today Foreign Minister Buwayz said that in assailing the UN report on the Qana massacre, Israel is assailing a fair stance. He stressed that Lebanon will cling to the UN role. He condemned Israeli attempts to obstruct the role of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon in the south. Regarding the Security Council's stance on this issue, he said the Security Council is again afraid of playing its role in view of the threat of a veto. He said the Security Council's resolutions on Israel are comparatively lenient.

Lebanon: Buwayz Says Lebanon Supports Role of UNIFIL

NC1005210796 Paris AFP in English 2055 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, May 10 (AFP) — Lebanon said Friday [10 May] it supported the UN mission in the south of the country and stressed that

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Israel would not succeed in its calls for a reappraisal of the peace force's operation in Lebanon.

Speaking at a press conference, Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said his country was committed to supporting the efforts of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and rejected Israel's bid to question the force's mandate.

"We Lebanese consider the UN's role to be very important," said Buwayz at a press conference. "It is not the first time Israel has tried to question the work of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon," he added.

Buwayz said Israel "was attacking the legitimate stance of the UN because it would like to have at its disposal a body which hides its (Israel's) real intentions and errors."

Israel said Thursday it would reconsider its cooperation with UNIFIL peacekeepers, who set up base in south Lebanon 18 years ago to monitor an Israeli withdrawal.

Israel also called on members of the UN Security Council to reconsider the mandate of the force when it comes up for renewal in July.

The Jewish state was reacting to the publication of a UN report which concluded that Israel's shelling of a UN compound in Qana in south Lebanon on April 18, in which 102 civilians died, was probably deliberate.

But asked if he was worried that UNIFIL's mandate would not be renewed, Buwayz said: "I do not think so.

"The Americans have given us no indication this might happen up to now," he added.

Lebanon: Dallul Warns of Possible New Israeli Hostilities

NC1105145196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul has warned that the Israeli enemy has not given up yet, noting the sharp tone of Shim'on Peres' statements in the last two days. He said an operation has taken place inside the occupied border strip and this is allowed in the April understanding. But an attempt by the Israelis to carry out a new hostile act cannot be ruled out, he added.

At a public gathering, Minister Dallul drew attention to U.S. and Israeli attempts to render the April understanding meaningless and turn the military observation committee into a political one with a view to introducing the multilateral committee, which Lebanon rejects. Minister Dallul stressed the need to stick to full coordination with Syria because such coordination is a guarantee in handling challenges.

Lebanon: Transport Minister—Hizballah Needs Distance From Iran

NC1305073096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Transport Minister 'Umar Misqawi stressed the need to make the resistance a focal point in various national events. He said Israel does not wish us well, adding that the International Observation Committee as stipulated in the April understanding is only a technical and military committee. He added: We should not be dragged into negotiations that are out of context.

Minister Misqawi said it is not in the interest of Hizballah to represent Iranian policy in Lebanon. Likewise, it is not in the interest of Iran to compete with the Lebanese State.

In his weekly news briefing, Minister Misqawi said the opposition is a partner in government. He added that the cabinet did not want fuel price increases, stressing that it is a strategic commodity that should be confined to the State.

Lebanon: Birri Optimistic April Understanding Will Succeed

NC1205165496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri has expressed optimism over the success of the April understanding, pointing out that it is for monitoring purposes only and not a political understanding.

Birri received Walid Junblatt, minister of refugee affairs, in al-Musaylih today in the presence of ministers Marwan Hamadah and Anwar al-Khalil and a number of deputies from the mountain. Birri said: This understanding will continue along its course and they will not be able to use it to revoke resolution 425 or separate the Lebanese and Syrian tracks.

Birri stressed that national unity is among the most important factors contributing to Lebanon's success at the local and foreign levels.

Minister Junblatt offered his condolences to the families of the southern martyrs. He said: We pay tribute to the mujahidin in the south and hope the international resolutions will be implemented as a just and dignified solution that lifts all the injustice against Lebanon.

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Birri met also with a delegation representing the Syrian Revolution Youth Union. He stressed in a speech on the occasion that remaining in the land is the basis and that the resistance is the weapon of peace that achieves withdrawal from the south.

Lebanon: 'Differences' Over Monitoring Committee's Functions Emerge

NC1205095796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0830 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 12 May (MENA) — The Lebanese Foreign Ministry has received a detailed report from its ambassador in the United States, Dr. Riyad Tabbarah, on the Washington meeting of representatives of the five-member committee monitoring the cease-fire understanding in southern Lebanon. The committee, emanating from the April cease-fire agreement, comprises Lebanon, Syria, the United States, France, and Israel.

Lebanese diplomatic sources today disclosed the differences that emerged during the meeting to discuss the proposed working papers. The meeting was chaired by Dennis Ross, U.S. coordinator of the Middle East peace talks. The same sources added that the differences focus on four points. The first point relates to the chairmanship of the committee, the second to the nature of its mission, the third to its location, and the fourth concerns the need to confine complaints to the committee alone.

These same sources pointed out that regarding the first point, the Americans want the committee to be under their chairmanship permanently, while the French want the chairmanship to alternate between the United States and France. The Israeli delegate has backed the U.S. position, while Lebanese Ambassador Tabbarah has called for the committee to be chaired alternately by every member state.

The second point of difference, the sources added, concerns the nature and makeup of the committee. While Lebanon wants it to be of a technical and military nature and to remain distant from any political negotiations — which must remain within the framework of the Madrid conference — the U.S. side wants the committee to include political and military officers. The French, for their part, want the committee to include a diplomat as well as military personnel, but they are ready to drop the diplomat if everybody agreed that the committee should be of a purely military nature.

The third point of difference has to do with the committee's headquarters. Lebanon wants it to be based in the Lebanese border town of al-Naqurah and to have two branches: one in Tyre, in southern Lebanon; the other in the Nahariyya settlement in northern Israel. However, the U.S. side proposed Cyprus as the committee's base, and it was backed in this by the Israelis, while the French support Lebanon's choice of al-Naqurah but do not object to Cyprus if all delegates unanimously choose it.

The fourth point of difference has to do with restricting complaints to the committee alone, which would handle any field security violation. However, Lebanon wants, in case of an Israeli aggression, to have the right to lodge a complaint with the Security Council, a proposal to which the United States objected. The same sources added that the French tend to agree with the U.S. side on this issue, and see no reason to resort to the Security Council.

These Lebanese Foreign Ministry sources added that in light of these different views, the meeting was adjourned until Tuesday [14 May] to give the U.S. Administration time to hold more contacts with the member states to iron out the differences and reach agreement at the coming meeting. However, in view of the nature of the discussion and ideas raised during the first meeting, the same sources doubt that a common ground can be reached at the coming meeting. The sources added that more meetings were to have been held on Friday, but the deep differences among the member states over the nature of the committee led to delaying the meeting for three days.

Lebanon: SLA Soldier Seriously Wounded by Roadside Explosion

TA1005111796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldier was seriously wounded by a roadside bomb in south Lebanon at noon today. Our correspondent in the north Ilan Ro'e reports that an SLA force was operating in the Jazzin enclave in the security zone's eastern sector when a roadside bomb was detonated, injuring the soldier. This is the third SLA soldier wounded over the last two days.

Lebanon: Explosion in Israeli-Occupied Area Noted

NC1105112696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Hasbayya has reported that a violent explosion rocked the Burghuz junction in the occupied Hasbayya area at 0950 today. He said that the explosion occurred on a road normally used by the Israeli occupation forces and their agents.

The explosion was probably caused by a device that went off near these forces as they were travelling to their

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nearby position in Tilal al-Ahmadiyah that overlooks the western al-Biqa'.

Lebanon: SLA Soldier Killed; Hizballah Attacks Israeli Post

NC1005170496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A member of the Lahd forces [South Lebanese Army, SLA] was killed when an explosive device went off in Jazzin today. An Israeli military source said the dead man was a member of a patrol operating in the said region. He was injured in the explosion and taken to Rampam Hospital in northern Israel. He underwent surgery but died later. The Israeli military source also said that light machine-gun fire was directed at Lahd positions in the eastern sector this afternoon, but there were no casualties. The source said the Israeli army and Lahd forces returned the fire.

Hizballah announced that this afternoon one of its groups attacked Sujud post, which is manned by Israeli troops. A Hizballah statement said the post was completely destroyed.

Lebanon: Israeli Soldiers Injured in Border Strip Ambush

NC1205071796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0700 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] AFP said in an urgent report that at least four Israeli soldiers were injured this morning in an ambush inside the occupied border strip in south Lebanon.

Israeli warplanes flew over the western al-Biqa' region at 0910 today.

[AFP in English at 0654 GMT on 12 May reports, in addition: "The Israeli army responded by shelling areas in the al-Biqa' Valley opposite its occupied zone, Lebanese police said."]

Lebanon: 'Terrorists,' IDF, SLA Exchanging Fire in Security Zone

TA1205072896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Heavy fire exchanges are currently being reported between the IDF [Israel Defense Forces], SLA [South Lebanese Army], and the terrorists in the eastern sector of south Lebanon's security zone.

This has been reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

Lebanon: Resistance Targets Israeli Patrol; Shelling Reported

NC1205082896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in the south has reported that six Israeli soldiers were injured this morning when resistance fighters detonated an explosive device near an enemy patrol on the Sujud-al-Rayhan road. The injured were evacuated by helicopters to occupied Palestine.

The occupation forces' artillery positions in Sujud, Bi'r Kallab, al-Zaffatah, al-'Ayshiyah, and Mashru' al-Tayyibah have been shelling al-Jabal al-Rafi', al-Jabal al-Akhdar, Mazra'at 'Uqmatah, the Nab' al-Tasi River basin, the forests of Sujud and al-Rayhan, and the hills of Jarju' with 120 mm, 155 mm, and phosphorous shells since 0900 today. Meanwhile, Israeli warplanes have been flying sorties over the region, dropping thermal balloons.

The enemy bombardment continues.

Lebanon: Israeli Air Raid Reported; Hizballah Claims Attack

NC1205083896 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0818 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our correspondent in the south has just reported that Israeli warplanes raided Tallat Mlita at 1110 today.

At least five Israeli soldiers were injured this morning in an ambush inside the occupied border strip. Security sources said an Israeli patrol came under rocket attack on the Sujud-al-Rayhan road in the central sector.

This is the first time the Israeli army suffers casualties since the implementation of the cease-fire that ended the Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath.

Hizballah has claimed responsibility for the current operation. In its statement, it said that one of its units attacked the Israeli patrol with machine guns and rockets, setting a military jeep on fire, killing and wounding the officers and soldiers in it, and putting a tank out of action.

Lebanon: Israeli Aircraft Raid Hizballah Positions

NC1205093696 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0920 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli warplanes staged a series of raids on the hills of Iqlim al-Tuffah at 1110 today.

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Lebanese police said two Israeli fighters fired nine air-to-ground missiles in three raids staged within five minutes. The missiles were fired at Hizballah positions in al-Jabal al-Akhdar, Mlita, and the Iqlim al-Tuffah hills. These were the first Israeli air raids since the cease-fire went into effect.

The Israeli artillery also bombarded Hizballah positions in Tallat Abu-Rashid and Birkat Jabbur south of the al-Biqa' Valley. The bombardment also targeted the hills of Iqlim al-Tuffah.

Lebanon: Evacuation of Villages Ordered for Return of Displaced

NC1305082696 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an effort to complete the program according to which the displaced are being returned to the various areas, the minister of displaced persons' affairs, Walid Junblatt, has issued an order to evacuate 19 villages in the mountain by the middle of August at the latest to allow the displaced to return to these areas.

Lebanon: Israelis Shell Villages in South

NC1305085496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 0815 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli artillery shelled the Iqlim al-Tuffah Heights this morning, concentrating on the Mlita Hills, 'Arab Salim, and al-Wadi al-Akhdar.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official—April Understanding No Substitute for Peace

NC1005145996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 10 May (MENA)—Lebanon's Hizballah has reiterated its adherence to the substance and spirit of the April understanding and declared that most observers see this understanding as an interim measure, one referring to operational matters, but not a political agreement, meaning it cannot be a substitute for a peace agreement.

The chairman of Hizballah's Political Bureau, Muhammad Ra'd, said his party supports the continued stationing of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] in south Lebanon and has no reservations about its presence.

Ra'd remarked: While the UN forces are stationed in the south the Resistance can carry out its legitimate right to resist the occupation.

Ra'd denied that any Hizballah members were found in the UNIFIL area when the Qana massacre took place, pointing out that Israel's allegations to the contrary were refuted by the report prepared by the United Nations. He said that Lebanon wants to pursue those responsible for the Qana massacre until there is international condemnation and sanctions against the terrorist Zionists who perpetrate such massacres.

Muhammad Ra'd, leading a delegation of Hizballah deputies, met Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz today to offer him thanks on behalf of Hizballah for the positions he adopted during the Israeli aggression.

Lebanon: Hizballah Official Says Operations To Continue

JN1005175096 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1535 GMT 10 May 96

[Interview with Shaykh Na'im Qasim, Hizballah assistant secretary general, by correspondent Ahmad Suwaydan; place and date not given; from the "The Week's Event" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Qasim] The 1996 Understanding has no secret supplements. The English version of the understanding whose Arabic translation was published by many papers is the only official version. When the discussions reached a difficult and complicated stage, the monitoring committee was mentioned as such without any details. This confirms that all parties wanted to end the crisis with this understanding and to publicize it, as the time factor is no longer in favor of the Americans, and the Israelis in particular.

[Suwaydan] Shaykh Na'im, how do you explain Christopher's letter to Peres, published a few days ago?

[Qasim] The letters Christopher exchanges with the Israelis are of no value to us. From what was published of these letters in the press, they are a response to a question by Shim'on Peres to Christopher. I believe they were presented in this manner to imply they are part of secret supplements so that Peres can cover up the failure and losses he sustained. Everybody knows there are no secret supplements.

[Suwaydan] Is there a pledge, or any agreement to suspend military operations in the occupied border strip until after the Israeli elections?

[Qasim] To engage in acts of resistance is not just a sacred right, it is a duty, as we have said repeatedly. God willing, the coming days will bring news of military operations against the Israeli occupiers. We are not interested in Israeli elections, nor are we a party to them. Our territory is occupied, and the resistance will continue. This will be manifested in practical terms.

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[Suwaydan] How do you explain the drop in Islamic resistance military operations or the tactical lull as stated by the Islamic resistance's central operations officer?

[Qasim] It is only natural that following a major aggression and a confrontation of this aggression by the Islamic resistance with all its organs and potential there would be some measures that are dictated by the situation on the ground, particularly following the return of the inhabitants to the various areas. The coming days will witness military operations against the occupation. The question is purely a procedural issue and not a political one.

[Suwaydan] Do you consider the monitoring committee, which stemmed from the April Understanding, a sign that the Lebanese state is back to assuming its role? Moreover, are you committed to the agreements to which the Lebanese state is committed?

[Qasim] The Lebanese state has its own role and the Islamic resistance has its own role. There is no competition between these roles. We never negated the state's role. Indeed, it is we who contributed to making civil peace and reinforced the presence of the state within the lives of the citizens. The state is present when it performs its duties, However, it is absent when it falls short of performing its duties.

Therefore, we do not believe that what happened regarding the monitoring committee or the entire April Understanding means that the state will assume our role. Naturally, the state is now back to assuming its role. Based on this, the monitoring committee will be implementing the April Understanding. This is purely a procedural matter. This is nothing unusual in this agreement. However, there is a need to deploy observers in case of an aggression, nothing more, nothing less. This is a procedural matter that does not require much effort or talk about roles.

[Suwaydan] However, there are attempts to upgrade the monitoring committee to the foreign minister level?

[Qasim] The reason lies in the stands adopted by the United States and Israel. They want to benefit from this committee to give it a certain political dimension so they would link this committee to the negotiations and say that the aggression resulted in activating the negotiations. Meanwhile, the Lebanese and Syrian sides, whose positions we support, insist that there should be a committee on the ground that monitors an understanding which relieved civilians from an aggression against them on the Lebanese side and ensures no response against civilians on the Israeli side.

Hence, what we are dealing with is a monitoring committee on the ground that the Israelis and Americans are trying to exploit as an outlet for a certain political role and situation. However, I do not think that this will be achieved because it completely violates the contents of the understanding, which is a result of our confrontation of the Israeli aggression.

Lebanon: Islamic Leader Condemns U.S. Extradition of Abu-Marzuq

NC1005183696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Fathi Yakan, chairman of the Islamic Group bloc in the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, has condemned the U.S. Administration's decision to extradite Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Political Bureau of Hamas [the Islamic Resistance Movement], to the Zionist entity. He said the decision to extradite Abu-Marzuq, which came in response to a request by the Zionist entity, shows that Washington is protecting Zionist terrorism. He called on Arab and Islamic peoples to cooperate to confront the crimes and designs of U.S. arrogance.

The governor of New York on Wednesday [8 May] decided to hand over Dr. Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist entity. Following this, the U.S. Department of Interior called on Americans abroad to be cautious for fear of possible revenge operations by Hamas.

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Syria: Kurd Leader Ocalan Survives Damascus Assassination Attempt

LD1105093496 Berlin DDP/ADN in German 0839 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Munich (DDP/ADN) — The leader of the extremist Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), Abdullah Ocalan, barely survived an attempt on his life in Damascus on Tuesday [7 May]. Quoting German security circles, the news magazine FOCUS reports that a bomb exploded in Ocalan's apartment. The guerrilla leader had repeatedly used his apartment for meetings with officials of the banned Kurdish party in the past.

A confidant of Ocalan's told FOCUS that the PKK leader had not been injured. He had not been at home at the time of the bomb blast. Ocalan was in good shape and was firmly resolved to renounce acts of violence in Germany in future.

FOCUS says so far there has only been speculation about the perpetrators of the attack. The Turkish secret service, MIT, was the most likely instigator as it had had Ocalan in its sights for years.

Syria: Al-Asad Receives DPRK Foreign Minister

JN1005191796 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1445 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 10 May (SANA)— His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad received Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy chairman of the executive council and foreign minister, and his accompanying delegation at the Presidential Palace in Latakia at 1245 today.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' and the DPRK ambassador in Damascus.

Kim Yong-nam conveyed a message from comrade Kim Chong-il, DPRK supreme commander and chairman of the National Defense Committee. His excellency the president asked him to convey a reply message to Kim Chong-il.

Discussions revolved around the situation in the region and the Korean peninsula as well as bilateral relations.

Syria: Al-Zu'bi Confers With DPRK Foreign Minister

JN1105153296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy chairman of the executive council and foreign minister, at 1000 today.

Nasir Qaddur, minister of state for foreign affairs, and the DPRK ambassador in Damascus, attended the meeting.

Kim Yong-nam conveyed greetings from DPRK Premier Kang Song-san to Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi who also asked him to convey his greetings to the DPRK premier.

The talks dealt with bilateral ties.

Syria: DPRK Foreign Minister, Delegation Leave

JN1205102696 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0825 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 12 May (SANA)— Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy executive council chairman and foreign minister, and his delegation left Damascus early this morning after a visit to Syria of several days.

He was seen off at Damascus International Airport by Assistant Foreign Minister Raslan 'Allush, a number of senior Foreign Ministry officials, the DPRK ambassador in Damascus, and embassy staff members.

Syria: Al-Z'ubi Receives PRC Vice Premier, Invitation

JN1205175196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1715 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi received PRC Vice Premier Wu Bangguo and his delegation at 1845. The meeting was attended by Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, and the Chinese ambassador in Damascus.

Wu conveyed PRC State Council Premier Li Peng's greetings to Mahmud al-Zu'bi and his invitation to visit the PRC. Al-Zu'bi asked Wu Bangguo to convey his greetings to Li Peng and accepted the invitation with thanks.

Talks dealt with the existing relations of trade and economic cooperation between the two countries and ways of promoting them for the benefit of the two friendly peoples.

Syria: Al-Ahmar, PRC Vice Premier View Ties, Developments

JN1205192896 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 12 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [ASBP], this evening received PRC Vice Premier

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Wu Bangguo and his delegation. The meeting was attended by the Chinese ambassador in Damascus.

Al-Ahmar welcomed the guest delegation, commending the deep relations of cooperation and friendship between the two friendly people, as well as between the ASBP and the CPC. Al-Ahmar noted the importance of party, state, and popular visits and meetings in strengthening and developing cooperation between the two friendly countries to achieve mutual interests and benefits in the various fields of cooperation.

The two sides exchanged views on the political developments in eastern and western Asia, the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon, and relations between the ASBP and the CPC in light of the successful implementation of the cooperation program between the two parties.

Comrade al-Ahmar expressed his satisfaction with the existing cooperation between the two friendly parties and countries. He noted that the Israeli aggression against Lebanon and the massacres committed by the occupation forces reiterate the aggressive nature of Israel. Al-Ahmar added that this also reiterates that Israel is the one obstructing the achievement of a just and comprehensive peace in the region, based on international legitimacy, and that Israel seeks to control and impose its hegemony over the region. He said that the Israeli aggression failed to achieve its objectives thanks to the steadfastness of the Lebanese Government, people, and resistance and thanks to Syrian-Lebanese cohesion. He added that this cohesion is based on the two sisterly countries' adherence to their rights and their determination to liberate their occupied territory in the Golan and southern Lebanon, as well as their continued coordination to achieve a just and comprehensive peace which will restore rights and lands to their owners and achieve security, prosperity, and stability in the region.

The head of the PRC delegation conveyed the greetings of the CPC leadership to the ASBP leadership and its desire to develop cooperation between the two parties within the framework of the programs that have been agreed upon. The PRC delegation expressed the cordial feelings of friendship the friendly Chinese people harbor for the Syrian Arab people. The PRC delegation also voiced solidarity and support of the PRC — people, government, and party — for Syria in its struggle to achieve a just and comprehensive peace which will restore lands and rights. [video shows al-Ahmar and Wu Bangguo seated and talking through an interpreter]

Syria: Radio Says Peace Opportunity Still Exists, Urges U.S. Role

JN1005165996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1142 GMT 10 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Throughout the peace march, Israel persistently resorted to obstruction and blackmail. Everybody knows how it placed successive obstacles to evade any real progress that would entail its withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all occupied Arab territories. It depicted the incomplete agreements as the model that should be emulated in order to achieve peace. It resorted to aggression and all forms of pressure and intimidation to blackmail Syria and Lebanon, which did not submit to the Israeli logic of peace.

We do not want to delve into details, which are known to all observers of the prolonged peace process. The latest blackmail attempt, represented by the brutal Israeli aggression against Lebanon, was the ugliest obstruction and blackmail attempt. Israel's return to gunboat diplomacy has pushed the peace process into a serious deadlock. This makes it imperative for the United States, in its capacity as a major sponsor of the peace process, to play its role of full and honest partner, based on the principles of the U.S. initiative and the Madrid conference. This also behooves all active world forces to save the peace process from collapse. They must prevent Israel from defying the international consensus on the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace, and not support Israel and increase its might and ability to stage aggression under the current mentality controlling the Israeli arena — a mentality obsessed with killing, shedding blood, and illusions of expansion and hegemony.

All observers asserted that saving the peace process can only be through respecting the UN resolutions, resorting to the foundations of the peace process, and through the United States playing its role as an impartial and fair broker in the peace process. Israel is deriving strength from the U.S. military and political support to continue the policy of force, aggression, and arrogance and maintain its policy, which seeks to undermine the opportunity to make peace. The U.S. sponsor should take these facts into consideration so that it will not lose credibility in front of the parties concerned. Furthermore, aggression and peace cannot meet. The policy of supporting the aggression will not serve this peace. On the contrary, it will lead to the collapse of all hopes of peace, security, and stability in the region, if Israeli policy remains unchanged.

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Peace is different from intimidating people. The requirements of peace, which are based on implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy, are quite different from pressures and blackmail attempts. Does the Israeli aggression, and the massacres to which it led, serve peace and the international consensus on establishing a just and comprehensive peace — which guarantees security and stability in the region and the world?

The deadlock in which Israel found itself following the utter failure of its aggression against Lebanon is the motive for all these statements, for its impatience, and leveling of accusations indiscriminately and away from heeding the fact that saving the peace process should take precedence. The restoration of the peace process requires great efforts, particularly from the U.S. sponsor.

Pressures and aggression cannot force Syria and Lebanon to walk the path that was trodden by other parties which gave concessions. It is high time for Israel to realize that the policy of giving concessions is far from Syria's principles. Syria does not acknowledge relinquishment. Has President Hafiz al-Asad not said repeatedly that nobody can force Syria to do what it does not want to do? It is about time for the United States, which realizes before anybody else Syria's genuine desire for peace, to restore balance in its role so that it can be viewed as a fair partner and impartial participant in the peace process. The success of the peace process is eventually in the interest of all in the region and the world.

Despite all difficulties, there is still an opportunity for making peace. Likewise, the United States still has a chance to emphasize its seriousness and shoulder its international responsibilities toward sponsoring the peace process and leading it to its aspired objective, that is, the establishment of real peace. Such peace guarantees the rights and dignity of all and wards off all causes of tension which threaten security and peace in the region and the world.

Syria: Israel Accused of Reshuffling Peace Process 'Cards'

JN1105073696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 11 May 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper TISHRIN's editorializes on Israel's attempts to reshuffle the cards during the meetings of the monitoring committee established by the April 1996 understanding. According to TISHRIN, Israel apparently wants the committee to discuss political issues and serve as a substitute to negotiations on the Lebanese and Syrian tracks. Israel is seeking to violate the letter and spirit of the April 1996 understanding, the provisions of which call for halting the brutal Israeli aggression against Lebanon and guarantee the Lebanese national resistance the right to confront the occupation.

TISHRIN adds: The April 1996 understanding will never be a substitute to a permanent solution within the context of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The monitoring group is a technical team that will work in the field. It should not carry out any political function. This means that the monitoring group must consist of military officials whose will examine complaints, verify data, and, after investigation violations, submit reports and recommendations to the relevant capitals. Given all this, any attempt to confer political dimensions on the work of the monitoring group by either Israel or the United States is deemed a deliberate violation of the provisions of the April 1996 understanding.

TISHRIN comments on the results of the barbaric Israeli aggression on Lebanon, saying that Israel reaped only disappointment and failure, because it failed to achieve its goals through military might, massacres, the destruction of villages and property, and the displacement of people.

TISHRIN adds: Having failed to achieve the political and military goals of its aggression, Israel is now using twisted methods and deception in order not to emerge from its "Operation Grapes of Wrath" empty-handed. This is why it deliberately seeks to reshuffle the cards, tamper with the provisions of the April 1996 understanding, and interpret them in its own way, in line with its whims, purposes, and anti-Lebanon aggressive and expansionist tendencies. Israel is gravely mistaken if it believes it can achieve its political schemes against Lebanon, especially since all previous plots against Lebanon have foundered thanks to Lebanon's steadfastness and to the fraternal pan-Arab relations that bind Lebanon to Syria, as well as their common stand in the face of challenges and dangers.

TISHRIN concludes: Syria, which has made every possible effort to save and protect Lebanon during its ordeal, is well aware that the measures to enhance the cease-fire cannot be a substitute to a permanent political solution, which lies in Israel's complete withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the unconditional implementation of Resolution 425 as a basis for achieving a just and comprehensive peace.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH addresses the aggressive Israeli policy, which is opposed to a just and comprehensive peace. AL-THAWRAH says that this policy is a dangerous continuation of the expansionist and aggressive course pursued by successive Israeli govern-

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ments. This policy aims to achieve expansionist and selfish purposes.

The paper recalls the devastating war Shim'on Peres waged against Lebanon, during which he perpetrated the savage Qana massacre. This massacre moved the world's conscience. The war epitomized the constant aggressive Israeli policy, which uses unlimited U.S. support to the Arabs' detriment. The paper warns that the constant U.S. bias in favor of Israel could nullify Washington's role as an honest broker in the peace process. This is why the U.S. initiative has failed to make progress or foster credibility. It has failed to make serious moves in favor of regional peace. Put simply, Israel's aggressiveness and obstruction of peace efforts have gone unpunished. The U.S. Administration had no need to draw the legitimate Arab wrath, which overwhelmed the Arab homeland and embarrassed all the Arab sides that maintain ties with Israel, which burned Lebanese children and tore them apart, even though they sought shelter at a UN compound.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Wrath also surfaced in the United States, because Washington has failed to do what it could have done. It has failed to make positive efforts to render the peace talks a success. The U.S. president has repeatedly said that Syria under President Hafiz al-Asad is committed to the peace process. Moreover, the international community is firmly convinced of Syria's commitment to this process.

AL-THAWRAH concludes: This requires the U.S. Administration to halt its bias toward Israel, because it runs counter to U.S. interests and hurts U.S. credibility. Political quarters, as well as Arab and world media, have constantly warned that the last opportunity for peace in the Middle East region could be wasted. Everybody knows that Washington can curb Israeli belligerence and make Israel comply with the relevant UN resolutions and the principles of the Madrid conference.

Syria: U.S. Urged To Change Stands To Regain Arabs' Confidence

JN1105122696 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0800 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 11 May (SANA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH calls for an intensive and quick Arab political move in two parallel directions. The first direction is to invest in the Israeli military failure and use this hideous aggression to aggravate the Israeli crisis, expose it on the international arena, and use all possible means to make the United Nations and the Security Council condemn the massacre and make decisions based on the UN report as they take the necessary measures in this case.

In an editorial today by editor in chief 'Amid Khuli, the paper says: The chances of succeeding at this are very slim due to the U.S. barrier, which will hamper any movement in this direction. Nevertheless, this does not relieve us of the responsibility to move and to exercise pressure surround Israel internationally. The least that can be done in this respect is to use Arab and non-Arab contacts with the United States, as well as the open lines of communication maintained with the United States by some Arabs who think that such connections can be useful in cases like this, to neutralize the United States in some way and to prevent it from being a party to a dispute from which — in the final analysis — it will only emerge as the loser.

The paper points out that the Arabs might not be able to bring about any change in this direction now. But once they resort to the language of national and pan-Arab interests and rights and use the power of a united position, then they can slowly bring about some limited change in the U.S. position. In other words, they can temporarily suspend the U.S. pressure on the Security Council and the United Nations so that the two organizations can be neutralized and free of U.S. pressure. Then they can take the necessary resolutions against Israel.

As for the second direction, AL-THAWRAH says: In order for the U.S. role to be compatible with U.S. interests, as well as with the process of a just and comprehensive peace — which the United States is sponsoring because it was the one who took the first peace initiative — the United States needs to review everything that has happened, starting with the aggression against Lebanon and the massacre and ending with the UN report on that massacre.

The paper adds: It is important for the United States to review all this in light of its role in the peace process so that matters will be straightened out and become more logical and so that its actions will be in harmony with this role. This way, the United States will regain its credibility, its role, and the confidence of the world, as well as that of the Arabs — the confidence that was severely shaken. The United States would also be able to regain the confidence of the two main parties to peace — Syria and Lebanon — so that it can resume its task and the peace process will return to its natural course. The United States can then expedite the negotiations, which were first stopped and then frozen by Israel.

Concluding its commentary, AL-THAWRAH says it hopes that the United States will realize this fact and make an accurate calculation in light of the fact that its long-term economic and political interests lie in a just and comprehensive peace, as well as in adopting

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a balanced position vis-a-vis the conflict — namely, a position that befits the role of a fair partner to the peace process.

Syria: Commentary Calls For 'Impartial and Balanced' U.S. Peace Role

JN1105160396 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 11 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: Israel's aggression against Lebanon has resulted in a new cycle of suffocation for the peace process and created more obstacles for it. This situation produced fresh complications, let alone those that already exist by virtue of Israel's poor understanding of peace. Israel views peace as a means to dictate its narrow security concepts and achieve its ambitions by dominating the region and its resources.

Israel has repeatedly caused a stalemate in the peace process. As soon as political and diplomatic efforts to revitalize the peace process succeed in extricating this process from one predicament, it faces another. This has been accompanied by tension and escalation in the cycle of violence and counterviolence. Israel resorts to aggression whenever it fails to peddle its views that are incapable of grasping the essence of peace and its realities. Israel also resorts to aggression whenever it does not want to make a decision about peace and about fulfilling its requirements.

We know, for example, that Israel sought to abort peace efforts while talking about an optimistic atmosphere. Israel also dictated impossible conditions under the pretext of searching for security which, in Israel's book, means exaggerated obsessions that reach the extent of disregarding Arab security and achieving the maximum gains under this false pretext. In doing so, Israel is bypassing the fact that security is a product of peace and that peace can only be achieved by ending aggression and occupation, in addition to the requirements of balance and evenness. This way, all parties will have security, which will ensure stability for the entire region and not for one party at the expense of another.

Israel suddenly and unilaterally suspended the Maryland talks. Shim'on Peres, head of the Israeli Government, brought forward the date of the elections. Once again, Israel played the tune of no sacred deadlines or agreements. It besieged the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and halted the implementation of the Oslo agreement, despite its shortcomings. Israel also asked the Palestinian side to meticulously fulfill the conditions of submission by abandoning the Charter, even under circumstances of siege, starvation, and occupation.

Everybody saw how Israel dumped the peace process through its aggression against Lebanon. Peres could not hide the fact that his popularity increased after the aggression. This means that the Lebanese blood auction was opened by the ugliest massacre to promote the Israeli election festival. This festival revealed the dangerous extent of extremism to which Peres may go to please an Israeli public imbued with a spirit of vengeance, aggression, and expansion.

The date set for the Israeli elections is of no concern to us at all. Our national and Arab principles are firm. We fully adhere to the entire land, rights, and sovereignty. However, the facts Israel created through aggression and blood are a cause of concern. This is because a more negative atmosphere is prevailing while the date set for the elections is approaching.

Instead of overusing meaningless words, we must emphasize the most significant results of the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. The policy of aggression and force can only lead to tension, explosion, and elimination of chances of peace. If the United States wants to end the current predicament of the peace process, it should begin to change the Israeli mentality, which poses a great danger to peace. Convincing Israel of the importance of a just and comprehensive peace is the only prelude to changing its obstructive stands. This requires an impartial and balanced U.S. role in implementing the resolutions of international legitimacy. These resolutions will restore land and rights, secure everybody's rights, and provide security and stability for all parties in the interest of all peoples in the region and the world.

Syria: Israel Criticized for 'Procrastination' on Monitoring Group

JN1205075696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 12 May 96

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper AL-BA'TH addresses Israeli procrastination on the eve of a meeting on the structure and work mechanism of the monitoring committee. AL-BATH says: The first meeting held on the structure of the monitoring committee provided for in the April 1996 understanding is reminiscent of the series of meetings held on security arrangements on the Syrian-Israeli negotiating track, which Israel stalemated due to its dogged insistence on ground warning stations on the Golan.

The paper adds: The differences of opinion are there for all to see. What we are seeing now is reminiscent

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of what happened before. The official draft of the April 1996 understanding calls for a cease-fire and also for halting the aggression against Lebanon. Five countries sponsored this understanding. These five countries must remain committed to the understanding, receive complaints, and determine which party violates the understanding. This explains the work mechanism of the monitoring committee, which, as a matter of course, must be based in the region.

AL-BA'TH adds: Israel proposed that the committee be based outside the region. Moreover, it does not accept the premise that the representatives attending the committee meetings be limited to military officials. Worse still, it is attempting to expand the powers of the committee. It wants the committee to take on a political role. which would nullify the committee's basic mission. All this shows that Israel is returning to the tactics of maneuvering and procrastination to buy time and render the understanding void of any meaningful content or instrument.

AL-BA'TH concludes: Given its military and political failure after two weeks of savage aggression, Israel will try to evade compliance with the provisions of the April 1996 understanding by setting impossible conditions that have become part and parcel of its aggressive policy.

In its commentary today, the newspaper TISHRIN comments on the UN report on the Qana massacre, indicating that the UN report confirmed that Israel, during the "Operation Grapes of Wrath" assault on Lebanon, demonstrated savagery when it attacked Lebanese civilians, including old people, children, and women, killing about 100 refugees who fled their southern Lebanese villages and towns and sought shelter at a UN compound. Nonetheless, Israeli shells were lying in wait for them. Consequently, Israeli troops killed them in cold blood. The Israeli savagery also targeted the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL], whose presence in Lebanon reflects the wishes of the international community and upholds the legitimacy of the United Nations. Israel poured its shells over the international legitimacy without heeding the rules, conventions, and covenants epitomized by UNIFIL's activities, role, and efforts.

TISHRIN adds: After the publication of the UN report that condemns Israel and holds it responsible for the perpetration of the massacre and the shelling of UNIFIL, Israel apparently sought to evade responsibility for its crimes by calling for reconsidering and ending the UNIFIL mission. This was Israel's response to the denunciation the United Nations submitted to the UN Security Council. To add insult to injury, Israel held UNIFIL responsible for the massacre because it protected and sheltered Lebanese civilians at the Qana UN compound.

TISHRIN concludes: The UN report was published in spite of all the pressure on the world body to amend and change the paragraphs and provisions of this report. What remains to be said is that the condemnation of Israel must not remain verbal. Such a condemnation must be followed by acts, policies, and efforts. Israeli generals deliberately and premeditatedly perpetrated the Qana massacre and shelled UNIFIL troops. As such, they are war criminals. It is the United Nation's responsibility to send them to court, to take them to task, and to hand down the punishment they deserve. This is because international legitimacy is being put to the test. International legitimacy must be upheld in the face of its enemies; namely, the Israelis.

In its commentary, the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: The recent savage aggression against Lebanon has produced a set of results unfavorable to Israel. These results were contrary to all expectations and to the political and military goals the Peres government sought to achieve in order to promote its election prospects. The devastating war, in which scores of villages were reduced to rubble and children were savagely massacred, is a serious precedent in modern history. Moreover, Israel flagrantly evaded peace when it suspended the Maryland talks. It sought to create new realities on the ground in the hope of negotiating from a position of strength so that it could force its dictates and its own version of peace, which it sought to achieve with minimal losses. Israel has abused the principle of exchanging territory for peace and has undermined the efforts to reach a settlement. Israel wants to keep everything for itself and deny others their rights. It wants others to be left with no choice but to surrender, and it takes full advantage of U.S. support, the political process, and the absence of a firm international position, given the well-known neutralization of world bodies except when the issue in question promotes the interests of the powers that exercise hegemony and their political goals.

The paper concludes that any peace arrangement must be grounded in justice, comprehensiveness, equitability, equality, and balance. Territory must be restored, and rights must be regained. Israel must also comply with the resolutions of international legitimacy. It is neither difficult nor impossible for the U.S. sponsor to accomplish such a mission. This sponsor must demonstrate impartiality, shun the policy of blackmail, and seek to bring the political process back on track. It must rehabilitate the spirit of the Madrid conference. It should not allow Israel to persist with its efforts to kill and waste peace opportunities.

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Syria: U.S. Urged To Play 'Just and Fair' Role in Peace Mediation

JN1205091796 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 11 May 96 p 5

[Editorial by Hisham Bukhari]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It is a big mistake to think that the single-sided contracts which were signed between Israel and the Palestinians and Jordan are "peace contracts", because such contracts contributed to further killing and aggression.

Facts and events have proven that the recent Israeli all-out war against South Lebanon and the Israeli massacres in Qana and al-Nabatiyah led to an impasse in the peace process which was launched on the basis of UN resolutions 242, 338 and 425 which call for an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories. It seems that Israel has returned to the language of the gun, thus pushing the US-supported peace process into a stalemate.

As a matter of fact, Israel is misusing the American political and military support, thinking that through violence and terrorism it can impose its conditions on Syria and Lebanon. The USA, as a major co-sponsor of the peace process, should play a just and fair role in the mediation and an honest partner so that the peace process can break its way through the Israeli misbehaviour and inhuman practices. Everybody was expecting the USA to condemn the Israeli massacre at Qana, in Lebanon. But contrary to all expectations, the USA has played a major role in providing coverage for the Israeli Qana massacre. Although, over 100 Lebanese civilians were slaughtered by Israel at Qana, the USA did not even blamed Israel for the slaughtering at a time when the whole world blamed Israel for this ugly crime because it was a premeditated crime.

However, providing support to the aggressors would never serve the cause of peace. On the contrary, it would ruin all the peace efforts and hopes.

Unfortunately, Israel is spoilt by the US blind support just like the criminal who does not receive any punishment for his crimes. Thus, Israel continues its old policy of liquidating as many Arabs as possible.

And, of course, the Qana massacre in Lebanon provides the best evidence of Israel's crime record.

It is high time for Israel to realize that Syria won't bow to the Israeli conditions, because Syria won't ignore one inch of her territories and is strong enough to resist the Israeli malice and schemes.

The USA which is confident of Syria's honest peace plans should play a fair and balanced role which would contribute to the establishing of just and comprehensive peace in the region, a peace which serves the interests of all the parties and the world.

Syria: Arabs Urged To Reconsider 'Separate' Deals With Israel

JN1305080296 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 13 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In its commentary under the headline "The Fall of Masks," the newspaper TISHRIN says: Now, after the Israeli aggression against Lebanon tore away the last mask behind which Israel hid its aggressive and expansionist face, and after the Qana massacre exposed the racist Zionist rancor against all Arabs, the following legitimate question poses itself: Is it not- the right time to stop some Arabs' running after normalization with Israel? The more important question is: Have the Arabs gained anything from the separate agreements which were concluded with the Israeli Government?

TISHRIN clarifies: Some sides try to convince the Arab public that rapprochement with Israel, particularly with the Labor Party, will reinforce the peace element in Israeli policy and help the Shim'on Peres government confront the Israeli extremists who call for killing Arabs, seizing their land, and destroying the pillars of their existence. On this pretext, Peres was received in a number of Arab capitals. He was praised and applauded by more than one Arab leader. He was introduced as a peacemaker and a builder of bridges of understanding and cooperation with the Arabs. So, what was the result? The result was that this peacemaker led a barbaric aggression against Lebanon, displaced approximately half a million citizens, and destroyed part of the Lebanese people's achievements. The result also was that he perpetrated the most hideous massacre against children, women, and the elderly who sought protection from the UN troops in Qana. The massacre was not a mistake, but a premeditated and planned action that was carried out in cold blood by the Israeli military officials. This was confirmed by the UN committee report which refuted all the Israeli Government's claims, and stressed that the shelling was premeditated. There is further proof of this; namely, the statements of the Israeli military personnel who perpetrated this crime. They said that more of these dirty Arabs should have been killed.

TISHRIN stresses: It has become impossible to find an excuse for the Israeli Government or to acquit it of the crimes it committed in Lebanon. Thus, the peace masks used by the Israeli Government to deceive the Arabs of its peaceful and cordial intentions toward them have

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fallen. It is difficult for any Arab leader now to say that the current Israeli Government is different from its predecessors, and that cooperation with it will encourage it to opt for peace.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: The Israeli aggression against Lebanon forfeited all the pretexts that were used to peddle normalization. It has become clear that the Arab side is the biggest loser of the agreements which were concluded with the Israeli Government. The continuation of this situation will lead to further losses and catastrophes for the Arabs and foment the aggressive and expansionist Israeli policy and encourage it to be more intransigent and arrogant. In light of this fact, logic necessitates that running after Israel should stop, and the separate agreements which were concluded with it be reconsidered. The Arabs' problems have aggravated following the separate deals with Israel. These problems can only be resolved by renouncing these agreements and reactivating Arab solidarity which will bring salvation, safety, and stability to all Arabs.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Calls For 'United Front'

LD1105161196 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Hekmatyar, amir of the Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Afghanistan, has emphasized the (?formation) of a common and united front.

This point was made during an interview by Dr. Taleb, spokesman of the High Coordination Council and representative of the Hezb-e Wahdat-e Eslami [Islamic Unity Party]. He added: In establishing a series of contacts, the member formations of the High Coordination Council will work out a common formula showing a common policy upon which all members will act. He added: An eight-man delegation of the High Coordination Council have recently met esteemed Hekmatyar in Meterlam, the capital of Laghman Province. They have held talks on political, military, and new developments, in particular the financial problems of Kabul citizens.

Taleb said: Brother Hekmatyar, when meeting the delegation of the High Coordination Council [HCC], has asked for the solidarity of parties forming HCC. The HCC, as before, should be an example of unity, should keep their solidarity and remain in a united front.

Taleb also said that the HCC's member formations have decided to have a common policy concerning the solution of Afghanistan crisis.

Afghanistan: Acting Premier Calls For Joint Commission With Pakistan

LD1105180696 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Acting Prime Minister Engineer Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai this afternoon took part in a news conference, attended by foreign journalists.

The prime ministry's press office reported to BAKHTAR that the acting prime minister first spoke about the country's political and military situation and the recent developments. He added: The Islamic State of Afghanistan follows a peace-seeking policy and calls for the consolidation of peace.

In reply to a question, Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai said: We assess the dispatch of Afghan delegation to Pakistan as the beginning of understandings between the two countries. We ask for a standing commission to be set up and work continuously for this purpose.

Afghanistan: Ahmadzai To Be Acting President During Rabbani Visits

LD1205173196 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, has issued a decree to the effect that esteemed Ahmad Shah Ahmadzai, acting prime minister, will act as president during his [Rabbani's] visits to the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Turkmenistan.

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Forces Arrive in Kabul To Assist Rabbani

LD1205144396 Tehran IRNA in English 1400 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, May 12, IRNA — Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] forces of Golboddin Hekmatyar Sunday arrived in Kabul after a lapse of about 15 months to join forces of President Borhanoddin Rabbani for defence of the capital city.

Afghan Defense Ministry spokesman Dr. 'Abdollah told IRNA here Sunday that a contingent of Hezb-e Eslami forces had been stationed at the garrison of the 16th army division in Pol-e Charqi.

Moreover, 'Abdollah added, hundreds of Hezb-e Eslami militarymen had been stationed at Paghman, Gharqi, Goldavud, Khord Kabul, Lowgar fronts and that operations were underway to transfer a number of other troops to the areas. Meanwhile, another military commander of the Afghan government, Moslem, said the two sides had formed their joint commandeering [as received] headquarters at the defense ministry, chaired by Hezb-e Eslami's Kashmirkhan.

Moslem said that over 3,000 militarymen loyal to Hekmatyar were expected to launch military operations along with government forces against Taleban in areas where government forces are engaged in clashes with Taleban in Kabul suburbs, Maydan Shar and north of Lowgar. He added that Hezb-e Eslami would take all military measures in collaboration with the government forces and the joint command headquarters would issue instructions and orders for the operations. Scores of vehicles are carrying Hezb-e Eslami militarymen to frontlines around Kabul.

As for military presence of Hezb-e Eslami forces in Kabul, 'Abdollah said the city would be mopped up [as received] from the militarymen and that Hekmatyar's forces would not be allowed to station inside the city.

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Afghanistan: Kabul, Hezb Sources Say Hekmatyar Joining Government

BK1305083596 Hong Kong AFP in English 0822 GMT 13 May 96

[Report by Marc Lavine]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, May 13 (AFP) — The opposition Hezb-e Eslami faction of former Afghan prime minister Golboddin Hekmatyar has joined the Kabul government, government officials and Hezb sources said Monday.

Defence ministry officials and Hezb sources told AFP in Kabul that hundreds of Hezb-e Eslami troops had already entered the besieged capital, while other men were expected later Monday. "The Hezb has finally joined the government, implementing an agreement signed between the two groups earlier this year," a defence ministry spokesman said.

"They have already started deploying troops at government bases in Kabul and will fight under the government banner in any military operation against the Taleban or any other enemy," he added.

Describing the accord between two parties as "unique in its nature," he said about 500 Hezb troops were already in Kabul and others would join later.

An AFP journalist confirmed dozens of soldiers of Hezb-e Eslami were in Kabul on Monday morning.

Under a pact signed between the former foes in February, the Hezb will be given the post of prime minister, minister of defence and minister of finance, officials said.

Both sides to the deal said the Hezb leader would enter Kabul "soon" although neither side could give an exact date.

Hekmatyar will take up residence here as soon as his security is guaranteed, officials said.

Government officials insisted that the Hezb acted alone and the deal did not have the backing of other members of the four party "Supreme Coordination Council", formed two years ago to oust President Borhanoddin Rabbani.

In Islamabad, a senior Hezb official said that no agreement has been reached yet. "We are still negotiating with the Kabul government," said Hezb spokesman Ghairat Baheer, who is also son-in- law of party chief Hekmatyar.

Baheer said the talks, continuing for the past several weeks, had made "big" progress, "but we have still not made our mind to join the government."

He said Hekmatyar's faction was also negotiating with three other partners in the Coordination Council in which Hezb-e Eslami is a key component.

Without disputing the announcement, other Afghan sources from Kabul said the Hezb did not want to disclose it.

"Hekmatyar wants to play a double game. He wants to associate himself with the Kabul regime and remain a member of the Supreme Coordination Council," an Afghan source said.

"If Hekmatyar continues to play this game he will lose his credibility," the source said, preferring to remain anonymous.

Hekmatyar has been in alliance with ethnic Uzbek warlord Abdol Rashid Dostam, who controls several province in northern Afghanistan.

The Shiite Hezb-e Wahdat of Karim Khalili and former President Sebghatullah Mojaddedi's National Liberation Front also joined Dostam when he staged an abortive coup in January 1994.

Reliable Afghan sources said Hekmatyar had been discussing the power sharing plan with the alliance's three other members.

However, the stumbling block was Rabbani's insistence to stay in power.

They said Hekmatyar had agreed that Rabbani could remain president for another six months while the other Council members were [words indistinct] accept him "even [words indistinct] for a day more", they said. Rabbani's tenure ended in december 1994.

Afghan sources said the the acceptance of power-sharing formula by Hekmatyar could herald the "death" of the two-year old Supreme Coordination Council.

Afghanistan: Government Minister Seriously Injured in Kabul Attack

LD1005185896 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Yesterday Seyyed Hoseyn Anwari, minister of social affairs [of the Islamic State of Afghanistan] and in charge of military affairs of Harakat-e Eslami [Islamic Movement], was attacked by an unidentified man in Kabul.

According to a [words indistinct] report, yesterday Seyyed Hoseyn Anwari, minister of social affairs and in charge of Harakat-e Eslami's military affairs, was suddenly attacked in the Darolaman area, as a result of

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which he was seriously injured. He was then dispatched to India for treatment. [words indistinct]

Afghanistan: Hezb-e Eslami Advances Against Taleban in Vardak Province

LD1005171496 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A responsible military source from Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] told radio message of freedom that yesterday morning the Hezb-e Eslami's mojahedin, with the cooperation of the local people, cleared the Taleban group from the Dahmardah district and the surrounding area.

It should be pointed out that the local people had been facing difficulties because of the presence of the Taleban, who had controlled the area for some time. These people asked the mojahedin, stationed in the border areas of the province, for help. As a result, the above district, including its center, has been cleared of the filth of the Taleban group. No accurate report is yet available on the loss of life and material.

The most recent reports say that after the complete seizure of Dahmardah District in Vardak Province, the mojahedin have started to advance toward Chak district in the same province. They have already cleared Alisheng and [word indistinct] areas of Chak district of the warmongering Taleban group.

The reports add that the mojahedin, in capturing these areas, seized as booty a large number of weapons, ammunition, and motor vehicles.

Afghanistan: Islamic Army Counters Taleban Attacks in Vardak

LD1005185096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dahmardah and Chak districts, Vardak Province, and several other villages have been cleared of the filth of the mercenary Taleban and these areas have been captured by the Islamic army's forces.

According to a report by the country's security sources, yesterday the Taleban group, while carrying out a series of military offensive moves in Vardak Province, attempted to attack the positions of the Islamic army. As a result of the bravery of the Islamic army's forces, the enemy's attack was beaten off. In a counter-attack, the Islamic army imposed heavy losses on the mercenary Taleban.

The military operation was carried out under the command of esteemed General Mozaferoddin, commander of division 42, Vardak Province. As a result, the district of Dahmardah and the villages of [words indistinct] and Chak district with its villages and hamlets were all cleared of the Taleban group.

As a result of this operation, [words indistinct] three ZK-1s, one infantry combat vehicle, 10 motor vehicles [words indistinct], (?six) 75 mm artillery, two BM-2 sets, six 72mm artillery pieces, six mortars, six communication sets, five DShKs, five Grinev machineguns, and a large number of various light weapons and ammunition were seized as booty by the Islamic army.

After the loss of these districts in which the enemy suffered a heavy defeat, the Taleban group then embarked on an unsuccessful attack which was again beaten off by the bravery and resistance of the Islamic army. During this attack the Taleban lost seven men. The dead bodies of the Taleban are still lying on the battlefield.

During this operation, a number of the Taleban were also captured alive by the Islamic army. The Islamic army's counter-attack and pursuit of the Taleban in Vardak Province is continuing.

Afghanistan: 2 Kabul Citizens Injured by Taleban Rocket Attack

LD1005191096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Today the mercenary Taleban group fired rockets on residential areas of Kabul city. BAKHTAR reports that this morning the Taleban group fired four rockets on the residential areas, as a result of which two Kabul citizens were injured and four private motor vehicles sustained damage.

Afghanistan: Government Troops Reportedly Seize Taleban Area Near Kabul

BK1105105896 Hong Kong AFP in English 1017 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KABUL, May 11 (AFP) — Afghan Government troops have captured two districts deep inside Taleban militia territory near Kabul, including a key strategic point, defence officials claimed Saturday.

Government forces seized the Chak and Dahmardah districts of central Vardak province on Friday after pounding the Taleban with heavy weapons and aerial bombing raids, they said.

Chak district is important because it lies next to the Taleban's main supply road linking the area, one of the springboards the militiamen used to launch their siege of Kabul last year, to their southern base at Kandahar, observers said.

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No independent confirmation of the capture of the two, districts — separated by 35 kilometers (21 miles), could be immediately obtained here, although government jets were seen streaking across Kabul's southern flank for most of Friday.

The repeated air, rocket and artillery barrages killed at least seven Islamic warriors and resulted in the capture of vast quantities of weapons, ammunition and vehicles, a senior commander, General Moslem told AFP.

"The attack was very successful as we seized two important areas as well as a huge stock of heavy and light weapons, ammunition and jeeps from the Taleban," he said.

Moslem said the Taleban launched a desperate counter-attack in Chak late Friday, but said they were repelled by the government fire-power.

Troops and supplies were ferried into isolated Chak and Damardah — which are about 50 and 70 kilometers (31 and 43 miles) from Kabul respectively — by helicopter, officials said.

Both areas have been under Taleban control for almost 18 months, long before the Islamic warriors moved to the outskirts of Kabul last September in a bid to seize the city.

News of the latest provincial skirmishes between the two sides came after a month of fighting between Taleban and the government in the western province of Ghowr, where the Kabul forces seized but later lost two areas of the strategically crucial province.

Ghowr borders on Herat province, which the Taleban seized from the government of President Borhanoddin Rabbani last September, and which Kabul is desperate to retrieve.

Kabul says it still holds an important valley inside Herat province, although it concedes that the two districts of Ghowr it won last month have been recaptured.

The Taleban rose up from the Koranic schools of southern Pakistan in late 1994 and have swept up control over about half of Afghanistan. They have vowed they will topple the Kabul government and install Islamic law across the country.

Afghanistan: National Security Troops To Be Deployed in Western Kabul

LD1105182896 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] To ensure security and peace in wards 3, 5, 6 and 7 in the city, the Kabul security commission held a session today. During the session, which was held under the chairmanship of commission head Mohammad Yunus Qanuni, issues concerning security in Kabul were discussed and views were exchanged. It was decided that the Protection Brigade's command and units of the National Security be sent to the western parts of Kabul. And in coordination with other units of the armed forces, it should remove all unnecessary security posts and ensure better security in the area. It should also extend living quarters and provide the ground for the people to work in a peaceful atmosphere.

Lieutenant General Qarabeg Ezedyar, the deputy head of the commission, told a BAKHTAR correspondent that during today's session it was also decided that the commission's proposals should be presented to the president and after presidential orders, an investigation commission should embark on determining the legality deeds to houses and apartments that were acquired by the law- breakers over the past two years, and should act in line with the laws of the country. A five-man commission was appointed to ensure fairness in the distribution of [passage indistinct].

Besides its original task, the commission has also been tasked to secure the cooperation of home and foreign sources, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Water and Electricity, for the completion of electricity projects and for obtaining equipment for them.

Afghanistan: 7 Taleban Killed; Mojahedin Prepare Offensive in Vardak

LD1205150796 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Seven Taleban were killed when their pick- up truck hit a mine in Sanglakh area. A military source in Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan reported to Radio Message of Freedom in a radio contact that a Taleban pick-up with seven armed men on board hit a mine on the Sanglakh-Zarkhana road. The vehicle was destroyed and the passengers were killed.

The report adds that since the mojahedin started a clearing-up operation against the Taleban in Dahmardah and Chak District, Vardak and Maydan Shar provinces, the people and mojahedin in the province have also started activities against the Taleban.

The report says that the mojahedin's operation, which recently started in Dahmardah and Chak, was indefinitely postponed yesterday [11 May]. Now the two sides are only engaging in a heavy weapons duel. The source said that yesterday the mojahedin were strengthening their positions and were making preparations to march into Taleban-held areas.

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India

India: President Accepts Rao Resignation

BK1005145096 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The Congress-I has kept its options open about about the formation of the new government at the center. Briefing newspersons in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, reiterated three options before the party — participating in the coalition government, supporting the coalition government from outside, and sitting in the opposition. Mr. Gadgil ruled out any change in the party leadership. The Congress-I Committee general secreatry, Mr. Janardan Pujari, said that the Congress-I party in parliament meets in New Delhi on Sunday [12 May] to elect the leader. [passage omitted]

Here is a latest news: The president has accepted the resignation and requested Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao and his colleagues to continue in office till alternative arrangements are made.

India: Assam, Pondicherry, Haryana Chief Ministers Resign

BK1005132196 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1130 GMT 10 May 96

[From the "Special Election Bulletin"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Assam chief minister, Dr. Bhumidhar Barman, has resigned. He submitted his resignation to the governor, Mr. Lok Nath Mishra, at Raj Bhavan [Governor House] in Guwahati today. The governor accepted Dr. Barman's resignation and asked him to continue in office till alternative arrangements are made. Dr. Barman contesting the just-concluded assembly elections lost his seat from Barkhetri to his nearest AGP [Asom Gana Parishad] rival and former speaker, Mr. Pulakesh Barua, by a margin of 6,762 votes. The Congress has suffered major reverses in Assam with the main opposition AGP, along with its allies, marching ahead to form the government. In the state, they have won 47 of the 92 seats declared so far. The Congress has bagged 25 seats.

The Pondicherry chief minister, V. Vaithilingam, also resigned today in wake of the party's defeat in assembly elections. Talking to newsmen at his residence, Mr. Vaithilingam said that he has submitted the resignation to Lieutenant Governor Mrs. Rajendra Kumari Bajpai. Accepting the resignation, Mrs. Bajpai asked him to continue as caretaker chief minister till the formation of a new government in the union territory.

The Haryana chief minister, Mr. Bhajan Lal, has decided to resign following reverses suffered by the ruling Congress in the assembly elections. Mr. Lal told PTI here that he would forward his resignation to the governor, Mr. Mahavir Prasad, soon. The chief minister said he had accepted verdict of the people with respect. The Congress-I had won only eight assembly seats out of the 81 results for which were declared so far.

India: Commentary Blames Rao for Defeat

BK1105122996 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 10 May 96 p 1

[Comment by V.N. Narayanan]

[FBIS Translated Text] As in the past, the Indian voter has sorted out the Congressman's most pressing problem — whether or not the party should have a change in leadership. In one fell stroke, the one-man-one-post issue is turned into a "one-man-no-post" situation. After the resounding slap that the party has received in most parts of India, Mr Narasimha Rao has very little reason to continue either as the Prime Minister or as the Congress president. Faced with what could be the Congress party's most humiliating defeat in a general election since independence (not excluding Indira Gandhi's post-emergency poll debacle) Mr Narasimha Rao has left himself with not even the escapist option of leaving it to the party to decide the leadership question. If he tries that, Congressmen should tell him to go.

It is not merely a question of loss of moral authority or legitimacy. Over the past nine months, the Prime Minister-cum- Congress president had so centralised all authority in himself that he alone had to take the blame for the Congress party's worst electoral performance in 44 years. The loss of three Congress ruled States — Haryana, Kerala and Assam — and a probable fourth one, that of Mr Digvijay Singh in Madhya Pradesh, is likely to leave the Congress as a ruling party in only three middle-sized States — Punjab, Orissa and Himachal Pradesh — with an assortment of mini- states. Never in the history of Indian democracy was so much damage caused to so great a party as the Congress in so short a span of time.

Perhaps the most telling example of presidential malevolence wrecking the party was the case of Tamil Nadu. In an act of inexplicable purblindness, Mr Rao aligned with a discernibly disgraced Jayalalitha regime especially after being presented with the first great opportunity for the Congress in Tamil Nadu to cut its apron strings tied to either of the Dravidian party. The consequence of this disastrous decision was a wipe-out not only of the party in power in the State but also of the Congress headed by Mr Narasimha Rao. If for nothing else, the Tamil Nadu fiasco alone should goad the

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Prime Minister into relinquishing the presidentship of the party. The fiction that it was the collective decision of the CWC is not believed even by credulous Congressmen. Incidentally the Congress president had converted even the elected CWC in to a nominated fiction.

It is difficult not to feel sorry for Mr Narasimha Rao whose Government has a lot to commend itself for before the electoral debacle. But all the governmental achievements of the Rao era have been neutralised by the slow decimation of the Congress party. The nation has too much to be sorry over the plight of the Congress for it to feel sorry for Mr Rao. What a waste of talent that a good Prime Minister should turn out to be an indifferent party chief!

Since there is life after every electoral reverse, Congressmen all over the country need not lose hope. A spell in opposition will have a chastening effect on the party and can help prepare it for the next battle at the hustings. For a start, the various Congress factions which fought elections under different symbols must now move towards unity under a new leadership which can undertake the much-needed organisation of reconstruction and reform. The Congress party has a tendency to confer too much power on the leader at the expense of democratic institutions which sustain a party's strength at the grass root level. The trap of personalisation and centralisation can be avoided only if the Congress organisation sheds its culture of corruption, sycophancy and power hunger. The survival of the Congress is a national necessity. Nursing it back to health is the duty of all Congressmen now spread out throughout the country as members of various parties and groups. The voter has done his duty; the onus is on Congressmen.

India: Minister Says Rao Not Solely Responsible for Poll Defeat

BK1105113096 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 10 May 96 p 9

[Unattributed Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In a significant development today, Environment Minister Rajesh Pilot threw his lot behind the Prime Minister saying P.V. Narasimha Rao alone was not responsible for the debacle of the Congress and declared that there will be no split in the party.

While referring to the statement of Atal Behari Vajpayee, he said no "honest Congressman will join the dishonest BJP". [Bharatiya Janata Party]

Pilot said it would be wrong to hold P.V. Narasimha Rao responsible for the drubbing that the party had received at the hustings. "We are all responsible for the failure," he added.

He said being a member of the Congress Working Committee and a Minister in the Council of Union Ministers he was party to all the decisions taken including party's decision to join hands with the AIADMK [All India Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] in Tamil Nadu.

"We cannot shrink from our own responsibility for the failure. We did not resign in protest against any of the decisions. So why make him resign? For what ?" he asked.

Pilot said steps should certainly be taken to strengthen the organisation and "we will sit together to formulate strategy in this regard." "If a sacrifice is needed to strengthen the party, we will sacrifice," he remarked.

Pilot who is seen in the party and the Government as a dissident and has earned the ire of Rao loyalists in the past scotched at reports of changing the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party.

Although he persistently attacked Chandraswamy much to the embarrassment of Rao loyalists, he made it clear that this was not a banner of revolt against Rao.

Talking to The Indian Express soon after his arrival here this evening from Dausa which he retained with a comfortable margin, Pilot admitted that he had received messages from G. K. Moopanar and Arjun Singh.

He said he was not in a position to give any details at this juncture as he had not been able to talk to them as yet.

When asked about the possible scenario emerging for Government formation, Pilot said "Either we sit in the Opposition or stop communal forces coming to power."

India: TV Reports Prominent Winners, Losers, Latest Party Position

BK1005170096 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Noted winners in the Lok Sabha elections today include Mr. Atal Behair Vajpayee from Gandhinagar in Gujarat. He defeated his nearest Congress rival Mr. Popatlal Patel by a margin of over 188,000 votes. In the Lucknow parliamentary constituency, Mr. Vajpayee is leading by over 14,000 votes. Mr. Madhavrao Scindia of the Madhya Pradesh Vikas Party has retained the Gwalior seat, defeating his nearest rival Phul Singh Baraiah of the BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party] by over 200,000 votes. Union Minister Santosh Mohan Dev of the Congress defeated his BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] rival in the Silchar constituency. Among

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the other winners are Sharad Pawar of the Congress from Baramati. He defeated his independent rival by 160,000 votes. P. Chidambaram of the TMC [Tamil Maanila Congress] won from the Sivaganga seat, defeating his Congress rival by nearly 2.5 lakh [one lakh equals 100,000] votes. M. Arunachalam of the TMC won from Tenkasi, defeating his Congress rival. Suresh Kalmadi of the Congress won from Pune, defeating his nearest BJP rival by 88,000 votes. Mrs. Menaka Gandhi of the Janata Dal has won the Pilibhit seat, defeating her nearest BJP rival by 283,000 votes. The West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, has retained the Satgachia assembly constituency. He defeated the Congress candidate by over 11,000 votes. Mrs. Rajmata Vijyaraje Scindia of the BJP has retained the Guna seat by a margin of over 130,000 votes. Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi of the BJP is leading in Allahabad. In the Ballia Lok Sabha constituency, the former prime minister and the Samata Party leader, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, is leading over his nearest Congress rival by 19,000 votes. Mr. Narain Dutt Tiwari has won the Nainital seat by over 58,000 votes.

The prominent losers include the Tamil Nadu Congress president, Mr. Kumari Anandan. He was defeated in Nagercoil. Former Deputy Prime Minister Devi Lal has been defeated in Rohtak constituency in Haryana. Other notable losers are Mr. Manishankar Aiyer of the Congress and veteran Janata Dal leader Mr. Madhu Dandavate. Mr. Salman Khursheed of the Congress has lost in Farukhabad in Uttar Pradesh. Mr. Arjun Singh of the Congress-Tiwari is trailing in Satna in Madhya Pradesh. The Bahujan Samaj Party leader, Mr. Kanshi Ram, is trailing in the Phulpur constituency of Uttar Pradesh. [passage omitted]

And now let us have a look at the latest party position in the Lok Sabha. The figures here show both the results and lead [out of 509 seats as shown on TV screen]: BJP, 153; Congress, 133; JD [Janata Dal], 35; CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist], 31; TMC, 20; DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], 17; Shiv Sena, 15; Samajwadi Party, 14; BSP, 12; CPI, 10; Samata Party, six; Congress-T, four; and others 59.

India: More Election Results Reported

BK1105101496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0845 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Uttar Pradesh, the Bahujan Samaj Party leader, Kanshi Ram, has lost from the Phulpur seat. He was defeated by the Samajwadi Party candidate, Jang Bahadur Singh Patel. According to UNI, Union Minister Balram Singh Yadav of the Congress has lost from Jalesar. in Jhansi, the president of the Congress-T, Narain Dutt Tiwari, has lost. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] leader, Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi, has won from Allahabad. He defeated his nearest rival Saroj Dubey of the Janata Dal by over 100,000 votes. Senior BJP leader, Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, has won the Lucknow seat. He defeated his nearest Samajwadi Party opponent and cine-star Raj Babbar by 115,000 votes. Prominent among others who were leading were the Samajwadi Party president Mulayam Singh Yadav from Mainpuri, Phoolan Devi of the same party from Mirzapur and former union minister Kalpnath Rai as an independent from Ghosi.

In Madhya Pradesh, the working president of the Congress-T, Arjun Singh, has lost from Satna. He was defeated by the BSP's [Bahujan Samaj Party's] Sukhlal Khushwaha. The BJP's candidate from Khajuraho Uma Bharati has won the seat.

In Bihar, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-S supremo Sibu Soren has retained the Dumka seat, while their party spokesman and sitting MP Simon Marandi has lost from Rajmahal. A star of the small screen and BJP candidate, Nitesh Bharadwaj, has won the Jamshedpur seat defeating his Janata Dal rival by over 55,000 votes. According to latest trends, Mrs. Krishna Sahi of the Congress was trailing in Begusarai. The Janata Dal leader Sharad Yadav was leading in Madhepura.

In the West Bengal Assembly elections, the Left Front has got an absolute majority. The front has won 185 of the 270 results declared so far. The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has got 143, the Forward Bloc 20, the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] 18, and the Communist Party of India four. The Congress has won 70 seats. In the Lok Sabha results in the state, Ajit Kumar Panja of the Congress has won the Calcutta northeast seat defeating his CPI-M rival Dipen Ghosh by over 65,700 votes. The Congress has also bagged the Calcutta northwest seat. Former union minister Devi Prasad Pal has won it by over 64,000 from his Janata Dal rival.

In elections to the Assam assembly, 115 of the 122 results have been declared so far. The Asom Gana Parishad, the AGP, and its allies have secured an absolute majority. The AGP is leading with 56, the Congress with 33 as second, the ASDC [Autonomous State Demand Committee] has five, the CPI-M two, the UNF [United National Front] two, the BJP three, the CPI three, the Congress-T two and independents and others nine.

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India: 2 Regional Parties Extend Support to NF-LF Combine

BK1205081696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Leaders of the NF-LF [National Front-Left Front] combine say their strategy for forming a new government at the center will be finalized today after consultations with their regional allies. The Janata Dal president, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, told newsmen after their two-hour meeting in New Delhi last night that the leadership issue was not discussed. He said the main focus of the discussion was to see that only secular forces form the new ministry. Asked whether the National Front-Left Front combine will seek the support of the Indian National Congress [INC] in forming the new government, Mr. Yadav said the main issue is to thwart the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party's] bid to come to power. Those who participated in the discussions included Mr. V.P. Singh, Mr. Jyoti Basu, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, Mr. H.D. Devegowda, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, Mr. Sharad Yadav, and Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan.

As reported the National Front-Left Front alliance and the BJP separately staked their claim to form the next government yesterday. The president has asked both the delegations to wait till the 11th Lok Sabha is constituted.

The Tamil Maanila Congress [TMC] leader, Mr. P. Chidambaram, has ruled out any support to a BJP government at the center. Taking part in a Doordarshan [Indian Television] program last night, Mr. Chidambaram said his party cannot extend support to a party, which he said is not secular. He added that the BJP has not sought the support of his party. In reply to a question, Mr. Chidambaram said his group wanted a strong, stable, and secular government installed at the center and asserted that the Congress and NF-LF combine should form a government.

The Asom Gana Parishad yesterday decided to extend unconditional support to the National Front-Left Front combine to form the new government. This was disclosed to UNI by the party president, Mr. Prafullo Kumar Mohanta, in Guwahati.

The Janata Dal high command has directed its lone legislator in Pondicherry to support the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam]-led front to form the government in the union territory. This was disclosed by the former dal legislator, Mr. M. Elangu, in Pondicherry yesterday.

The Congress Working Committee is meeting in New Delhi today to discuss the emerging political situation. In a press release, the AICC [All India Congress Committee] general secretary, Mr. Janardhana Poojary, said that party president, Mr. Narasimha Rao, has convened the meeting at 1030. The meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Party, CPP, has however been rescheduled for the evening to enable all the newly elected members of parliament to attend it. The meeting is to elect a leader of the CPP.

On the election front, of the 504 Lok Sabha results declared so far the BJP and its allies have won 179. The tally of the NF-LF alliance is 93, and the Indian National Congress 135. The number of seats won by the DMK-TMC alliance in Tamil Nadu is 37. Others including the Telugu Desam Party, the Akali Dal, the Bahujan Samaj Party, and the Asom Gana Parishad won a total of 52 seats. Independents won eight. [passage omitted]

India: Regional Parties Back NF-LF To Form Coalition Government

BK1105114296 Delhi THE PIONEER in English 10 May 96 p 1

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Left Front-National Front [LF-NF] combine has swiftly taken the lead in roping in the regional parties to support it for a coalition government. At the same time, the Left parties are pulling no punches in projecting CPI(M) [Communist Party of India—Marxist] leader Jyoti Basu as the next Prime Minister.

The National Front, [NF] which now finds itself the junior partner of the alliance, is yet to make up its mind on the issue of leadership. However, the choice of the NF has narrowed down to Mr Basu and former Prime Minister V.P Singh. Leaders of the Janata Dal, a dominant partner of the NF, are expected to take a formal decision on Friday.

Janata Dal president Laloo Prasad Yadav appears to be out of reckoning for the post as the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-Samata combine has made considerable dent in his Bihar bastion.

The Left claims to have managed to persuade its poll partners — Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) and Telugu Desam Party (Naidu) — into the proposed coalition government. Incidentally, the three parties were not part of the poll allies of the National Front.

On the other hand, the Janata Dal is concentrating its efforts on wooing Congress rebels like Tamil Maanila Congress leader G K Moopanar, Mr Arjun Singh and Mr Madhavrao Scindia.

CPI(M) general secretary Harkishan Singh Surjeet and CPI leader A B Bardhan had a meeting with Mr V P Singh and Mr Biju Patnaik.

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The major political grouping realise that support of the regional parties would not be enough to attain majority. The LF-NF combine in the best possible scenario will amass 212 seats with the support of regional parties, short of the magic 269-figure for a majority. Thus, the support of the Congress will be a must.

Though the Janata Dal is expecting a split in the Congress, such an eventuality may be averted with a large number of Congress leaders thinking that the party should extend support to the prospective LF-NF government from outside. Psephologists have projected the BJP and allies emerging as the largest group with 175 to 185 seats. The LF-NF was projected to bag 140 to 150 seats while the Congress was likely to win 130 to 140 seats.

Others, which included regional parties and independents, are expected to get 70 to 80 seats. These include Tamil Maanila Congress (20), DMK(17), TDP(N)(18), AGP and ASD(six), and Congress (T) (five).

During the day, leaders of the CPI(M) and the CPI [Communist Party of India] agreed to take the initiative in putting a non- Congress, non-BJP coalition together. The meeting was attended by Mr A B Bardhan, Mr Atul Anjan, Mr D Raja and Mr Yellamandla Reddy from the CPI's side, and Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet, Mr Sitaram Yechuri, Mr Prakash Karat and Mr S Ramachandran Pillai from the CPI(M)'s side.

The leaders agreed to take up the issue of participating in a coalition government at the Centre in respective meetings over the weekend. The CPI(M) politburo is meeting on May 11 and 12 and the CPI central secretariat is meeting on Friday, followed by a three-day meeting of its National Executive.

However, the choice of Mr Jyoti Basu as the Third Front's Prime Ministerial candidate is now near certain. "We will be very happy if a Communist becomes the Prime Minister," said Mr Bardhan.

The Communist Party of India (CPI) took an active part in clinching the deals. Mr Karunanidhi has apparently assured the Left leaders that his party and the Tamil Maanila Congress (TMC) would be part of the coalition. "Mr Karunanidhi consistently took an anti- Congress, anti-BJP position in the poll campaign and he has agreed to be part of our coalition. He has also undertaken the task of making the TMC a partner in our coalition." Mr Bardhan said.

It was an important understanding to reach as Mr Karunanidhi was being wooed by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader A B Vajpayee and also the Congress. The BJP, in particular, is keen to rope in Mr Karunanidhi in its fold but that possibility is now remote following the DMK's understanding with the Left.

Likewise, Mr Bardhan also clinched agreements with Mr Mohanta of the AGP and Mr Chandrababu Naidu. The BJP was also pushing hard for the AGP's support but Mr Bardhan said the Assam party will stay with the Left and, by implication, with the LF-NF combine.

Mr Chandrababu Naidu, whose party did exceedingly well in Andhra Pradesh, will be in the Capital on Friday to formally clinch the agreement with LF-NF leaders. Mr Naidu already conveyed his support to the Third Front coalition over phone on Thursday, Mr Bardhan said.

India: Congress Working Committee To Back 'Any Secular Front'

BK1205125996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The prospect of the National Front and Left parties forming a coalition government at the center has brightened with the Congress Working Committee [CWC] deciding to back any secular front. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, told our correspondent that the CWC has firmly ruled out any truck with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. He said a resolution passed by the Congress Working Committee says that the mandate given by the people is for a secular government, as 80 percent have voted for it.

Meanwhile, the newly elected Congress Parliamentary Party is meeting this evening to elect its leader.

India: BJP Tells AFP of Congress Party's 'Negative Approach'

BK1205131996 Hong Kong AFP in English 1217 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, May 12 (AFP) — Hindu nationalists blasted the Congress (I) party of outgoing Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao on Sunday for trying to block their bid to form the next government in India.

"This mandate was clearly in favour of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]," Narendra Modi, a senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party), said of elections in which the party won the most number of parliamentary seats.

"The Congress should have accepted the mandate gracefully instead of trying to keep the BJP out of office under the mask of ideology," Modi told AFP.

But he said the BJP was not surprised by the Congress's "negative approach."

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The Congress said Sunday that the electoral outcome was in favour of a "secular alternative" to the aggressively pro-Hindu BJP and decided to back a centrist-leftist alliance's bid for office.

It said after a meeting of its policy-making Congress Working Committee (CWC) that it wanted to foil the BJP's attempt to take the nation's reins, and did not rule out joining a coalition.

"The Congress fought and lost the elections on the plank of providing stability, not secularism," Modi said. "How can they talk of communalism now?"

The National Front-Left Front (NF-LF) alliance which has staked a claim to form the government would finish with more than 100 seats in the 545-member parliament. It said it would seek the Congress's support to back its claim, appearing to drop an earlier condition that it would do so only if the Congress dropped Rao as its leader.

Modi said the Left, which would have a major say in a non-BJP coalition government, had no right to dictate the country's agenda after finishing with just 40 seats.

But the BJP politician said the NF-LF, who have yet to elect a leader or decide on the composition of a possible coalition government, had "too many bridges to cross before the swearing-in." He said the BJP still had "positive chances" of forming a government as the single largest party in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament.

Ramakrishna Hedge, a leader of the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party) which is a key component of the NF-LF, welcomed the Congress decision. "We are heading for a coalition government," he said. "Today's CWC meeting has made it clear to us that they are going to support our government either from outside or having a straight alliance. The modalities are being discussed...," he said.

India: NF-LF Coalition To Do 'Everything' To Block BJP

BK1205134896 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 11 May 96 p 1

[Report by Smita Gupta]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The National Front-Left Front's (NF-LF) efforts on Friday centred round presenting a credible coalition with an all-India character, even as the initiative shifted clearly to Left parties: The latter sought an appointment with President Shanker Dayal Sharma on Saturday on behalf of "the Left parties and its allies" to convey their "proposals regarding the formation of a government."

Immediately after his arrival here West Bengal chief minister Jyoti Basu told Doordarshan that the NF and Left parties would do everything to prevent BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] from coming to the power. He said NF-LF would jointly stake their claim to power before the President on Saturday and show majority. He is here to attend the crucial meeting of the CPM [Communist Party of India (Marxist)] politburo from Saturday.

If former Prime Minister V.P. Singh is playing a catalytic role in these efforts, the initiative is now with the Left, largely because the regional parties that the coalition is depending on fought the elections as electoral partners of the Left — the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) in Assam, the Telugu Desam Party (Chandrababu Naidu) in Andhra Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party (SP) in Uttar Pradesh and the Janata Dal — were all allies of the Left, while the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagham (DMK)-Tamil Manila Congress (TMC) combine in Tamil Nadu was an ally of the Communist Party of India (CPI).

Mr Singh is in touch with the chief ministers/ chief ministers- to-be of eight states — Assam, Tripura, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala — to seek their support for what will be a Left-led coalition.

India: Samata Party Offers Support to BJP in Forming Government

BK1205144796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Samata Party said it will offer only issue-based support to BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] if it wants to form a government on its manifesto. Briefing newsmen after a meeting of the national executive of the party in New Delhi today, the Samata Party president, Mr. George Fernandes, said in case BJP wants a coalition it has to be based on a minimum time-bound program to be agreed upon between them. He said his party is of the view that the president should invite the BJP first to form the government as it is the largest party in the new Lok Sabha. Replying to a question, Mr. Fernandes said the BJP has not formally approached Samata Party for its support.

India: Radio Updates Lok Sabha Election Results

BK1205162696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Some more Lok Sabha results have come in. In West Bengal, the CPI [Communist Party of India] has retained the Bashirhat parliamentary seat. Mr. Ajay Chakraborty of the CPI defeated Mr. Dilip Majumdar of INC [Indian National Congress]

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by a margin of 86,016 votes. Mr. Rupdhar Pal of the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has been reelected from the Hoogly parliamentary constituency. He defeated Mr. Gouri Shankar Bannerjee of the Congress by a margin of over 38,400 votes.

In Manipur, Professor M. Kamson of Indian National Congress has retained the Manipur Outer Lok Sabha seat. He defeated his nearest rival, Miss Tingamti, Independent, by a margin of 78,000 votes.

Results of 523 Lok Sabha seats of the 537 for which elections were held are available now. According to PTI, of these BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] has secured 158 seats followed by the Indian National Congress with 135. The Janata Dal is in the third place with 38 seats. The tally for the other parties is CPI-M, 32; CPI, 12; TDP [Telugu Desam Party], 16; Shiv Sena, 15; BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party], 10; TMC [Tamil Maanila Congress], 20; Samajwadi Party and DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], 17 each; Shiromani Akali Dal, eight; Samata Party, six; AGP [Asom Gana Parishad], five; Congress-T, four; All India Forward Bloc, three; others, 15; independents, seven.

India: Government Formation Efforts Continue

BK1305034696 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Some outlines of a new government at the Center are slowly emerging following the Congress party's decision to back any secular front for a coalition government and the leaders of National Front, left parties are intensifying their efforts to chalk out a strategy to enlist support of some of the regional parties.

The Congress Working Committee at its meeting yesterday said that it will take positive steps to install a government which is totally committed to secular democracy and communal harmony. In a resolution, the highest decision-making body of the party said it will continue to work for the welfare of the economically and socially weaker sections of society and the minorities. Mr. Narasimha Rao, who was unanimously reelected leader of the Congress parliamentary party, has reiterated the party's commitment not to have any truck with the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]. The party spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, said that the Congress will have negotiations with other secular parties for the formation of the government. Replying to a question whether his party will extend support to the NF-LF [National Front-Left Front] combine, he said that he will not rule out any possibility.

Throughout the day yesterday, the National Front, Left party leaders held consultations to mobilize support for their allies and regional parties, including the TDP [Telugu Desam Party]-Naidu, the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam], the Asom Gana Parishad, TMC [Tamil Maanila Congress], and Shiromani Akali Dal. The Andhra Pradesh chief minister, Mr. Chandrababu Naidu, held discussions with the DMK president, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, in Madras last night on the current political situation.

Four regional parties are meeting in New Delhi today to finalize the basis of their support to the two main combines staking claims to form the next government at the Center. These include the DMK, the TDP-Naidu, the Shiromani Akali Dal.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] has said that it will not take part in the coalition government if the Congress is a part of it. The CPI-M central committee is meeting in New Delhi today to discuss the matter. The CPI [Communist Party of India] national executive is also meeting today to examine the options before the NF-LF combine.

The Shiromani Akali Dal has ruled out any understanding with the Congress. The Dal president, Mr. Prakash Singh Badal, said in New Delhi last night that the final decision about his party's alignment with any group will be taken today.

The BJP has criticized the efforts to prevent it from forming the government at the Center. Commenting on the activities in the Congress and NF-LF camps, the party chief, Mr. L.K. Advani, said the verdict of the people is sought to be subverted by manipulation and maneuver. He said these efforts will not succeed.

India: Security Forces Kill 8 'Militants' in Jammu, Kashmir

BK1205085896 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, eight militants have been killed in two encounters with the security forces. Three militants, including a foreign mercenary, were killed yesterday in Jangalwar area of Doda District. In the other encounter, five militants were killed at (Funsaw) village in Doda District. Three security personnel also lost their lives in the encounter.

India: CPI-M Leader Among 8 Killed by Armed 'Militants' in Tripura

BK1305090296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In west Tripura, eight businessmen including a CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leader were gunned down by some armed mili-

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tants at Ratila last night. Four others received serious injuries. The state police chief, Mr. Sandeep Kumar Chatterjee, told UNI at Agartala that the assailants raided the Ratila local market and asked the businessmen to line up. The extremists then sprayed bullets from their automatic weapons, killing eight persons on the spot. The injured have been admitted to the hospital. The ultras escaped after looting the market.

India: 2 Kashmir Leaders Escape Assassination Attempt

BK1205082996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In occupied Kashmir, two prominent Kashmiri leaders, Mr. Yasin Malik and Mr. Javed Ahmad Mir, escaped attempts on their lives. Two land mines exploded on a highway as these leaders and supporters of All Parties Hurriyat Conference were on their way to attend a ceremony at Charar Sharif yesterday. A Hurriyat leader, Mr. Abdul Ghani Lone, has accused Indian Government for the attack on Kashmiri leaders.

Meanwhile, the occupation authorities have warned that they will take stern action against Muslim employees if they refuse to report for duty for so-called elections in the held valley. The Muslim employees have refused to perform election duty in the farcical elections. Meanwhile, at least 14 people, including six Indian soldiers, were killed in fierce gun battles between freedom fighters and Indian forces.

Iran

Iran: Velayati on 'New World Order' in Post-Cold War Era

LD1205183996 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 12 May 96

[Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent in Mashhad — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] I would like to ask how you see the strategic effects of the project in the long and the short terms?

[Velayati] As you know, during the Cold War era a line divided the world from Berlin to Korea and a large part of the dividing line went along Iran's northern borders. Now, with the downfall of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War period, we no longer see that red dividing line. Immediately after the downfall of the former Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, some Western countries, particularly the Americans, attempted to capitalize on the situation and the existing vacuum and attempted to create a new order, as it were, to suit their purposes. What is happening in the region conforms neither to the former situation, that is the Cold War, nor to the new order as claimed or desired by the Americans. As you can see, the delegations which have come to Mashhad and will go to Sarakhs for the inaugural ceremony are from Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, the Indian sub-continent, south-east Asia, China, and Europe.

The large-scale and high-level presence from various sensitive spots shows that a cooperation and solidarity between the world's sensitive spots is taking form which does not conform to America's plans for the new world order. Today there is no reason why we and Russia should consider each other a rival. The cooperation between the countries north and south of the dividing line I mentioned is not against anyone. It is a cooperation program, a regional cooperation plan, a plan to bring about peace and stability and calm. Undoubtedly if there is cooperation between the countries in the region the grounds for hostilities will be lessened. As we have seen, four countries from the Persian Gulf and the Arabian peninsula have taken part. Their eyes are on the north and so is their direction. On the other side, Russia, Ukraine, and Commonwealth of Independent States member countries have come and regard Iran as an important and strategic center for all those sensitive spots and a means to heal the wounds between nations, for economic cooperation, for development in the region and the formation of a very useful order in the region, very different from what others wished to paint for us. [passage omitted]

Iran: Spokesman Condemns U.S. Transfer of Abu-Marzuq to Israel

LD1005205796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1930 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The spokesman of our country's Foreign Ministry has condemned the decision of the U.S. Federal Court to hand over Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist regime, saying that this was a violation of international agreements on the civil and political rights of individuals.

Mr. [Mohammad] Mohammadi, spokesman of the Foreign Ministry, said with regard to the decision of the U.S. Federal Court: The U.S. administration is committed to this international agreement on the civil and political rights of individuals which has been endorsed by the UN General Assembly and conforms to the principles of the [UN] Charter. The U.S. Federal Court cannot reach decisions that violate the U.S. Administration's commitment to international agreements and laws.

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The Foreign Ministry spokesman described the decision as illegal and obstinate, adding: On the basis of Article 13 of the agreement, the U.S. court can only reach a verdict on the expulsion of the head of the Political Bureau of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], who was detained illegally in the first place.

He added: Delivering Dr. Abu-Marzuq to the Zionist regime is a violation of international agreements and human rights and also means that the United States is a partner to the aggressive, inhuman actions of the Zionist regime, thus provoking the Muslims' contempt all the more.

Iran: Commentary Notes U.S. 'Retreat' From Sanctions Against PRC

LD1105131696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0957 GMT 11 May 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] America has announced that it will not be taking any punitive measures against China, which had been planned against Beijing because of the sale of nuclear technology by China to Pakistan. Apparently the decision has been made because the Beijing authorities have undertaken to refrain from selling nuclear technology to Pakistan without safeguards. However, according to political observers, Beijing never intended to put nuclear technology at the disposal of those countries which intended to use it for military purposes. The sale of nuclear technology by China to various countries, including Pakistan, is undertaken within the framework of scientific and technical cooperation, and is aimed at helping with infrastructural industries such as power installations, agriculture, and medicine in the receiving country.

That important issue must be assessed within the bounds of strategic relations between China and third world countries. Those relations have been one of the essential principles of China's foreign policy for years. Nevertheless, Washington has always tried to use that as a tool to exert pressure on Beijing by exaggerating that cooperation and interpreting it as nuclear cooperation by China with third world countries to provide access to nuclear weapons by those countries. Since America has never succeeded in showing any documents in that respect and the constant repetition of those allegations has brought about the opposite results, it has been forced to raise these baseless allegations less and less.

Of course, it must be admitted that resistance by Beijing in the face of U.S. pressures and the threat of retaliation by China are some of the other reasons for America's retreat. U.S. abstention from carrying out punitive measures against China is considered as the White House's second instance of retreat. Earlier, because of its trade interests, America agree to abstain from exerting pressure on Beijing regarding the human rights issue. Moreover, it seems U.S. animosity toward and disagreements with China are not so much to Washington's benefit because of Beijing's regional status. The key to stability in eastern and southeast Asia — regions on which America is keeping a close eye — is in the hands of China. At the same time, the closeness of relations between Beijing and Moscow, in particular after signing their historic accord two weeks ago, has reduced China's vulnerability in the face of U.S. pressures and, in contrast, has increased Washington's vulnerability.

Side by side with those issues, the reduction of tension in U.S.-Pakistani relations must also be borne in mind. The improvement in relations, which came about after the abolition of the Pressler amendment, has resulted in America reducing its pressures on Pakistan. That is because, under the new circumstances where new polarization is taking place in the region, Pakistan is of crucial importance to the White House, although the dominant views in the Pakistani community are not such as to allow favorable exploitation of the conditions by America.

Iran: Kazakh President, Delegation Arrives in Tehran

LD1105093596 Tehran IRNA in English 0854 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, heading a political delegation, arrived here Saturday [11 May] and was welcomed at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport by Vice-President Hassan Habibi.

A number of Kazakh senior officials, including deputy prime ministers and ministers of foreign affairs, oil, and transport, are accompanying Nazarbayev and are expected to discuss bilateral issues with their Iranian counterparts.

In a brief talk with Habibi, Nazarbayev called for further promotion of Tehran-Almaty relations.

Commenting on friendly ties between the two republics, the Kazakh president expressed hope that various agreements on different fields, particularly those related to oil, will be reached.

Expressing satisfaction over the visit of the Kazakh delegation to the Islamic Republic, Habibi stated that the two sides will finalize agreements on different issues that have been previously discussed.

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Iran: Kazakh, Iranian Presidents Call For Cooperation

LD1105123096 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev arrived in Tehran this morning at the head of a senior delegation which includes a deputy prime minister and the ministers of oil, trade, industry, and transport.

After his arrival, the Kazakh president said that Iran was the first country to recognize Kazakhstan and that the Kazakh people and government would always remember this. Mr. Nazarbayev pointed out that Kazakhstan greatly values its relations with Iran and therefore has the best and the most extensive of relations with Iran.

He said: We are ready to expand cooperation in all spheres and will sign many documents during this visit.

Mr. Nazarbayev also stressed: we strongly believe that the legal status of the Caspian Sea has to be clarified so that the littoral states will benefit jointly from the rich resources of the sea without foreign interference.

The Kazakh president said his country is prepared to extract 4 million tonnes of oil from the Caspian Sea annually, to rebuild and modernize its ports, and to cooperate with Iran for the construction of the Turkmenistan oil pipeline which runs across Iranian territory. He added that his country has proposed 17 industrial and trade projects projects to Iran and that these will be finalized during his current visit.

Mr. Nazarbayev also stressed the importance of regional peace and stability and hopes that the economies of the region, as well as friendly and brotherly relations, will be revived when regional disputes, including the one in Afghanistan, have been settled.

At the meeting, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani said that several years of discussions and achievements by Iranian and Kazakh officials has established a useful trust between the two sides. Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani said there are many areas for cooperation between the two countries, including the construction of the railway between Iran and Central Asia, which will open a new chapter in regional cooperation.

The president said many important projects, including those for the transfer of oil and industrial development, are to be discussed and decisions will be made on holding an Economic Cooperation Organization summit.

Iran: Caspian Sea Oil Pipeline Deal Signed With Kazakhstan

LD1105135396 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1130 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The first round of talks between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Kazakhstan was held today in Tehran. At the talks an important document between the two states, on the construction of an oil pipeline through Iran, was signed by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani and his Kazakh counterpart, Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Based on the agreement, Iran will receive the oil in the Caspian Sea and will then deliver it to the Persian Gulf to be sold on the international market.

The president of Kazakhstan, after the signing of the agreement, pointed out that Kazakhstan believes Iran is the best route for the export of the country's oil and that the agreement is therefore highly significant.

The Iranian president described the agreement reached between the two states as very important. Mr. Rafsanjani then clarified that the Islamic Republic of Iran will refine the oil it receives on the Caspian Sea coast and will return it to Kazakhstan on the coast of the Persian Gulf, and will benefit from the value added.

Iran: Minister Discusses Oil Deal With Kazakh Counterpart

LD1105193996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At a meeting in Tehran this evening between Mr. [Nurlan Utepuly] Balghymbayev, the Kazakh oil and gas industry minister, and Mr. [Gholamreza] Aqazadeh-Kho'i, our country's oil minister, the details were examined of the agreement between Iran and Kazakhstan about swapping oil and exchanging its by-products.

According to the Central News Unit, on the basis of the agreement reached between the oil ministers of the two countries, starting in two months time, Kazakhstan will deliver a minimum of 2 million tonnes of crude oil — of a quality which can be refined at the Tehran and Tabriz refineries — per year at one of Iran's northern ports and, in exchange for the revenue generated by this transaction, Iran will deliver the equivalent amount of its own oil to Kazakhstan in the Persian Gulf.

During the next 10 years, the quantity of oil to be swapped between Iran and Kazakhstan will increase to 6 million tonnes per year. Kazakhstan will also sell 60,000 tonnes of gas oil and 60,000 tonnes of fuel oil per

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month to Iran. Kazakhstan's gas oil will be delivered to Iran using the newly constructed Sarakhs railway and its fuel oil via the Caspian Sea. Iran will, in turn, increase the export of its own gas oil and fuel oil from the Persian Gulf in view of the import of these products from Kazakhstan.

Iran: Further on Agreements Signed With Kazakhstan

LD1105172696 Tehran IRNA in English 1653 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Iran and the Republic of Kazakhstan have signed a number of trade agreements in a bid to broaden their economic cooperation, one such agreement allowing the latter to offer her oil to Iran at the Caspian Sea for supply of an equivalent amount by Iran to Kazakhstan at the Persian Gulf for export purposes.

Once the agreement is effected Iran will collect cash transit charges from Kazakhstan in addition to benefiting from the differential in value of oil in the north and south. Meanwhile, Kazakhstan's oil will be refined at Tehran refinery later on.

Within the agreement Iran, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan are also to cooperate in building a trunkline for conduiting Kazakhstan's oil. On the basis of another agreement Iran, too, has undertaken to rehabilitate Octai port of Kazakhstan at the Caspian Sea in a bid to increase transfer of Kazakhstan's oil to Iran.

Among other agreements beween the two countries is one for opening an Iranian consulate in Kazakhstan that was signed by Iran's President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and visiting Kazakh President Nazarbayev here Saturday [11 May].

He said here today that Iran was the best route for conduiting Kazakh oil to international markets with the least costs, and President Hojjat ol-Eslam Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani said here Saturday that the agreements he had signed with Kazakh president would usher in a new phase in relations between the two countries.

Kazakhstan, a former Soviet republic, and Iran have coasts at the Caspian Sea, the former in its northern parts and the latter along the base of the sea.

Iran: Kazakhstan's Nazarbayev Assesses Visit

LD1105200496 Tehran IRNA in English 1914 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Presidents of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Kazakhstan exchanged views on mutual international cooperation, regional crisis in Tajikistan, Karabakh and Afghanistan, the Caspian Sea legal regime, oil, banking, industrial, transportation, communications, cultural and training projects.

President of Kazakhstan thanked Iran's warm hospitality and said the growing trend of mutual cooperation is favorable, adding that previous visits of the presidents of the two countries to Tehran and Almaty have contributed towards creating a secure and constructive atmosphere for strengthening mutual relations.

"We are greatly pleased that through the unceasing efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran the Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link is becoming operational in the very near future," said the president of Kazakhstan.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev thanked Iran for its assistance in reconstruction phase of Kazakhstan, adding that the people and government of Kazakhstan are interested in the Islamic Republic of Iran having a greater role in development and reconstruction projects such as housing projects, construction of railroads, roads of his country.

The Kazakh president was particularly interested in seeing Iran participating in the construction project of the new capital of his country and reconstruction of 'Octav port' in Kazakhstan.

President Rafsanjani stressed Iran's interest in expanding relations with Central Asian countries and said one of the important grounds for cooperation between Iran and Kazakhstan is in the field of oil and gas.

The president noted that Iran is ready to make use of its port facilities in the north in order to refine and export Kazakh crude oil to other countries via southern outlets.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani welcomed the greater expansion of economic and trade cooperation with Kazakhstan, specially after the inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad link and underlined the need for the creation of banking and customs facilities between the two countries in order to expedite economic and trade cooperation.

President Rafsanjani also voiced Iran's readiness in joint ventures in the development, industrial and shipping projects in Kazakhstan in addition to a closer cooperation in exploitation of the resources in the Caspian Sea.

The President of Kazakhstan extended an official invitation to President Rafsanjani to visit Kazakhstan.

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Iran: Joint Communique Issued After Nazarbayev Visit

LD1105173896 Tehran IRNA in English 1721 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Iran and Kazakhstan issued a joint statement on Saturday [11 May] at the end of the visit of Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev to Iran.

The two countries, underlining further consolidation of ties in political, cultural, economic and commercial fields, also stressed the need for resolving regional conflicts and stabilizing regional security and peace.

The two sides also expressed their willingness to benefit further from joint ventures and public and private investments in the areas of gas, oil, trasportation, industry, trade, agriculture, and mines.

Terming as suitable the transfer of Kazakhstan's oil and gas to international markets via Iran, the two countries have embarked on studying ways and means for the implementation of both oil and gas pipeline projects from western Kazakhstan to northern Iran and eventually to the Persian Gulf.

The joint communique underscored the necessity for studying the legal regime of the Caspian Sea, cooperation of littoral states in the exploition of marine and mineral resources along with environment protection.

The communique clearly pointed out that the Caspian Sea and its resources solely belong to littoral states and thus only these coutries have the right to decide about the nature of its activities.

Iran and Kazakhstan in the statement put stress on respecting terittorial integrity, political independance, and equal governing status of regional governments.

It added that the regional governments should refrain from employing force and making use of threat. It went on to say that the Caspian Sea should be used for peaceful purposes with free and secure navigation in the benefit of the entire region.

The two countries also proposed a meeting of the foreign ministers of five Caspian littoral states in near future to discuss legal regime of the sea.

Iran: Syria's Vice President Khaddam Arrives in Tehran

LD1105140696 Tehran IRNA in English 1356 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Syrian Vice-President Abd-al-halim Khaddam arrived here on Saturday [11 May] heading a high ranking delegation and was received by his Iranian counterpart Hassan Habibi at Tehran's Mehrabad Airport.

Talking to reporters upon his arrival, Khaddam said that he was here to participate on behalf of President Hafiz al-Asad in opening ceremony of Sarakhs-Tajan track.

He said while in Tehran, he would have an opportunity to hold talks with senior Iranian officials on Tehran-Damascus ties and the conditions created in the region in the aftermath of the Zionist regime's aggression on southern Lebanon.

Among other topics to be discussed by the two sides, Khaddam said, were issues of mutual interest and future of bilateral ties.

On his part, Habibi said that in their meetings, Iranian and Syrian officials are to discuss recent developments in the region and issues of mutual interest. He said the Syrian economy minister is to arrive here next week in order to examine ways of activating Tehran-Damascus joint economic commission.

Iran: President Receives Syrian Vice President Khaddam

JN1105151796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1415 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tehran — Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam this afternoon.

Khaddam arrived in Tehran today to take part in the inauguration ceremony of an Asian railroad network. Speaking to reporters upon arrival at Tehran International Airport, the vice president said he is proud to represent President Hafiz al-Asad at the ceremony to inaugurate this vital project. Khaddam added that during his meeting with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi he will discuss issues of mutual interest, especially the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon, as well as ways to enhance bilateral relations.

The vice president was received at Tehran International Airport by Iranian Vice President Dr. Hasan Habibi; Ahmad-Akhundi, minister of housing and head of the Iranian side to the Joint Syrian-Iranian Economic Committee; Hoseyn Sheykh ol-Eslam, assistant foreign minister; Ahmad al-Hasan, Syria's ambassador in Tehran; and Hasan Akhtari, Iranian ambassador in Damascus.

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Iran: Rafsanjani, Syria's Khaddam Discuss Regional Developments

LD1205101396 Tehran IRNA in English 0538 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Mashhad, Khorasan Prov., May 12, IRNA — The visiting Syrian Vice-President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, in a meeting here Saturday [11 May] night with President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, reviewed the latest regional developments. Khaddam is currently here to attend the inauguration ceremony of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railroad, due to be held Monday.

Commenting on the recent Zionist aggressions in south Lebanon, the Syrian official noted that the Israeli attacks were aimed at crushing the forces of the Hizballah, weakening the spirit of resistance, and sowing discord between Lebanon and Syria.

He appreciated the unity of the Lebanese people in confronting Zionist aggression and criticized some regional states for their cooperation with the Zionist regime.

- Meanwhile, President Rafsanjani said that the attacks launched by Israel only led to the humiliation of the Israeli and U.S. governments. He appreciated the crucial role played by Damascus and thanked the people of Syria for supporting the resistance of the Palestinian and Lebanese nations.

Iran: Rafsanjani, Syrian Vice President Discuss Lebanon

LD1105195696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam was received by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani tonight. Our correspondent sent us a report about this meeting a few moments ago to which I draw your attention.

[Unidentified correspondent] At the meeting, 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam presented a report about the recent attack by the Zionist regime on southern Lebanon and regional developments, saying: One of the aims of the Zionist regime in this attack was to inflict a blow on Hizballah, weaken the spirit of resistance of the Lebanese people and government, and sow discord between Lebanon and Syria; and not only was that regime unable to achieve its evil aims, it managed to strengthen the honor and power of the resistance groups, and to increase the unity and solidarity between them, the Lebanese people, and the world of Islam.

The Syrian vice president described as unprecedented the national unity and solidarity shown by the Lebanese people in the face of the aggressive nature of the Zionists, and he criticized the cooperation between some of the countries in the region and the regime occupying Jerusalem.

For his part, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani praised the Lebanese people's steadfastness and brave struggle against the repeated acts of aggression of the regime occupying Jerusalem, and said: The recent attack of the Zionists on Lebanon had no result other than shame and disgrace for Israel and the U.S. Administration, and it proved the justness of the struggles of the wronged people of Lebanon and Palestine.

The president also expressed his appreciation of the role played by the Syrian Government and people in supporting the struggles of the Lebanese and Palestinian people in the face of the crimes committed by the regime occupying Jerusalem.

Iran: Habibi, Syrian Vice President Discuss Lebanon

LD1105200196 Tehran IRNA in English 1918 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 11, IRNA — Iran's First Vice President, Hasan Habibi, and visiting Syrian Vice President, 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam here Saturday [11 May] reviewed current developments in the Middle East and the situation in southern Lebanon.

The Iranian official told Khaddam that Zionist attacks against southern Lebanon had been the direct consequences of Sharm al-Shaykh conference earlier on.

He said it was a source of confidence for Muslims that the majority of world Muslims had knowledge of the seriousness of the problems and that they had shown very reasonable responses to the situation.

The visiting Syrian official appreciated the continual support of Iran for the people of Lebanon, and expressed pleasure with the firm position of the Islamic Republic against the United States and said that regular exchange of opinion between the officials of Iran and Syria would help neutralize Zionist plots.

Khaddam expressed hope that the rest of Muslim states would side with Iran and Syria and thereby make it impossible for the Zionist regime to strengthen its foothold in the region.

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Iran: Cleric's Supporters Deny Involvement in Bahrain Bombs

MS1305093696 London THE GUARDIAN in English 13 May 96 p 9

[Report by Kathy Evans: "Iran Arrests Rebel Clerics"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Iranian authorities have arrested 23 clerics and supporters of a grand ayatollah based in the holy city of Qom, Sayyed Mohammad Shirazi, for alleged illegal activities in support of the uprising in Bahrain.

The Iranian government has been persistently blamed by the Gulf states and the West for orchestrating the two-year-old uprising, accusations which Tehran has continually denied.

Iranian officials say their security services discovered that some of the ayatollah's followers had been forging documents and passports to assist the Bahrain movement, and so it arrested them.

Contrary to Western perceptions, the Tehran government — despite being dominated by clergymen — does not control the ideas of grand ayatollahs, the country's most senior clerics. Growing numbers of them are opposing the government, and its spiritual leader, Ayatollah Khamene'i.

Representatives of Ayatollah Shirazi visiting London say they are being persecuted because he does not believe in Ayatollah Khamene'i's divinity or his claim to be leader, or marja, of all Shi'ites.

Ayatollah Shirazi, they maintain, is one of six grand ayatollahs who question the religious foundations of the Islamic republic. Ayatollah Shirazi has been put under house arrest and banned from teaching in Qom or conducting Friday prayers in retaliation for his public expressions of opposition to the Iranian government.

His representatives deny any involvement in the Bahrain uprising, saying that in his writings and a fatwa issued six months ago he specifically condemns the use of terrorism or violence.

The truth between the conflicting accusations lies in the shrouded world of clerical politics in Qom and the overseas' supporters of important ayatollahs.

Ayatollah Shirazi is highly influential among the Shi'ites not only of Bahrain, but of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. He taught in the holy cities of Iraq but was deported by the authorities in the mid-197Os. He fled to Kuwait and then back to Iran.

Shortly after the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran, the ayatollah's nephew, Hadi Moudaressi, was deported from Bahrain. In the early 1980s, the ayatollah's followers were said to be behind an attempted coup against the Bahrain government.

Remnants of Ayatollah Shirazi's spiritual followers, led by Mr Mudarassi, then went on to establish the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, now the most radical group opposing the Bahrain government. The ayatollah's followers say that while some of the group's members may look to Ayatollah Shirazi as their religious mentor, he has no political connection with the group.

They add that the Islamic Front enjoys the official protection of the Iranian government, maintains offices in Tehran, Beirut and Damascus, and has access to Iranian military training facilities in the Beka'a valley in northern Lebanon. It also receives funds, the ayatollah's followers say, from Iranian foundations and organisations.

But the claims of official Iranian protection are ridiculed by the Islamic Front's London spokesman. "Ayatollah Shirazi is considered by many in our group to be our marja, and like him we oppose the concept of Khamenei's divine right to rule Iran and Shi'ites. It would be out of the question therefore for the Iranian government to support us," he said.

Front officials claim that it is their political rival, the Bahrain Freedom Movement, that has the clearest links to Iran and pro-government ayatollahs in Qom.

The Bahrain Freedom Movement is by far the largest opposition group campaigning for democracy and constitutional rule on the Gulf island, and embraces Sunnis, Shi'ites and secular Bahrainis. It also denies any connections to Iranian ayatollahs, or the government.

"When we set ourselves up we wanted to cut all our links with foreign governments and clergymen. We wanted to Bahrainise the movement," said the group's official in London, Sa'id Shehabi.

Both the Islamic Front and the Bahrain Freedom Movement profess not to know who is behind the bombings of restaurants, hotels and shopping malls in the island state.

The Bahrain Freedom Movement says it has been negotiating for months to bring the Islamic Front into mainstream opposition politics, but has so far failed.

Unlike the Freedom Movement, the Islamic Front wants to rid Bahrain of its ruling family and after that, of the US military presence in the south of the island, which has long been criticised by the government in Tehran.

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Iran: Commentary Upbeat on Kabul, Islamambad Peace Talks

LD0905145896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0955 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The peace talks between the representatives of the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan, which began on Tuesday [7 May] in Islamabad, concluded yesterday, after a series of general agreements on improving relations and expanding economic ties between the two countries were announced.

The agreements include a wide spectrum of issues of mutual concern to the two countries such as commercial ties, the implementation of industrial projects in Afghanistan and the removal of political resentment between Kabul and Islamabad.

However, a number of diplomatic circles believe that the main focus of the talks and the probable agreements have centered mainly on political ties between Afghanistan and Pakistan, because the implementation of industrial and commercial projects, to which a number of official reports referred, seems somewhat difficult under the present conditions and with the low level of political ties between Kabul and Islamabad.

The circles believe that now that Kabul and Islamabad have come through the first stage of removing tension between themselves, the have no option but to find a solution for fundamental issues are blocking the deepening and expansion ties between the two countries.

An important factor in the relations between the two countries is the suspicion the two countries' leaders have about each other's political intentions. This suspicion, which started three years ago when Borhanoddin Rabbani came to power, came to a head last year after the Taleban group offensives in western Afghanistan and the subsequent attack by the people of Kabul against the Pakistani Embassy in Kabul. Ultimately this led to the breaking off of relations between Kabul and Islamabad.

Many political experts think that the start of peace talks between the representatives of the two countries, is an initial sign of their existing suspicions being set aside.

By expressing optimism about the results of the talks, these political experts indicate the emergence of a fundamental change in Afghanistan and its effect on that country's foreign relations.

Experts believe that the most obvious signs of the change are the stability of the Afghan Government, the confinement of its opposition groups and the willingness of the Pakistani Government to resolve its differences with Rabbani's government.

In recent months, the change has paved the way for Kabul to activate its diplomacy and make efforts to resolve all kinds of problems relating to foreign relations. It seems that if it does not face an unexpected obstacle, it will take Rabbani's government through its sensitive stages and encourage it to continue peace-seeking negotiations with opposition groups without any fear of foreign pressure.

Iran: Paper Comments on Khamene'i Message on Press Boundaries

LD1105175096 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 8 May 96 p 2

[Editorial: "The Red Line — Guidance of the Leader of the Revolution in Meeting the Members of the Press; An Address to Some Intellectuals and Some of the Faithful"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] One of the important issues raised by the leader of the revolution [Ayatollah Khamene'i] was the existence of "legal borders and boundaries" in the field of journalistic work which could also be described as the "red line".

A legal border and boundary, and in the words of the leader the legal "red line", is not fundamentally a new and unique phenomenon that could be interpreted as a "particular characteristic" of the Iranian and Islamic society. We can also notice the phenomena of "border and boundary" and the "red line" in other systems, such as the communist or socialists orders, which have been generally destroyed, or the capitalist and liberal systems of the West, which have open economies and open societies. Therefore, the composite term the "red line" — despite the awe that it conveys — is in fact and in essence nothing but the "legal border and boundary." More accurately the "red line" is the "law". [passage omitted]

The first point of the argument is addressed to intellectuals and freedom-seekers, regardless of the fact that these names and claims are true or superficial.

The true or alleged intellectual — regardless of his religious beliefs and his way of thinking that he has, like everybody else — should realize before anything else the historical stage and the geographic domain in which he lives. Culture, history, and nationality in Iran are so interwoven that it is only possible to distinguish them in the imagination, let alone find a true and essential contradiction between them. One cannot live in this culture, this history, and this nation but expect things that coordinate and harmonize more with

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the cultural, national and historical climate of other countries, such as Switzerland, France, or the mad (cow diseased!) Isles. Every country and territory has different cultures, different beliefs, different measures, different principles and different values, according to its national and historical structures. [passage omitted]

Here, our argument is not about the necessity or the existence of the red line or vice-versa. The red line exists and the frank statements of his eminence, the leader of the revolution, are too clear for anyone to try to deny. Religion, logic, and guardianship also confirm the existence of the need for "border and boundary" and the "red line". However, the argument is also about the interpreters and administrators of this truth. Some of them sleep with the excitement that in the early morning and as soon as they arrive at their office, they herald the good news of having discovered a new red line to be added to the red lines of the previous days and they thus expand the circle of the taboo subjects everyday! In such circumstances, the "red line" and the "border and boundary" become a principle of their own and no longer an "exception". Then, the law will have to be changed to: "No! The press is not free except in exceptional cases as identified".

However, we know that religion, logic, and guardianship are all based on the two principles (which fit into the domain of religious thought and belief), and that the divine and popular promise has always firmly stated that "Generally, the press is in principle and basically free, unless in cases which have been made exceptional".

Nepal

Nepal: Koirala Wins 'Overwhelming' Vote To Head Congress

BK1205145196 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 11 May 96

[Report by THE KATHMANDU POST reporter—received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, May 10 - The president elect of the Nepali Congress [NC], Girija Prasad Koirala, formally assumed his office after the outgoing president Krishna Prasad Bhattarai officially handed over the post of party president to him this morning.

Addressing the on-going ninth general convention of the party, Koirala called on his party workers to rise above groupism and narrow-mindedness and work in line with the party's constitution.

He urged the party workers to work hard so as to make constructive use of the experiences of older generation and the creative resources of the younger generation leaders. "We must also develop high morals among us to inspire and gain the confidence of the people," Koirala said.

Noting that healthy competition within the party has given added dynamism to the party's democratic credentials, the NC's newly elected president said in totality the ninth convention had helped create new energy within the party.

Koirala was elected the party's new president with an overwhelming majority of votes (1144) on Thursday, leaving behind his two rivals - Minister Chiranjibi Wagle and ex-minister Ram Hari Joshi - by huge differences of ballots. Wagle and Joshi had secured only 254 and 12 votes respectively. A total of 1429 general convention members exercised their voting rights to choose the party's topmost leader, of which 19 were declared invalid.

"The country is plagued by extreme left activities, conspiracies of the reactionary forces and the attempts from these quarters to weaken democratic institutions and Constitution," Koirala said, adding that the Nepali Congress had a big responsibility to shoulder at the present situation.

Immediately after the handing over of presidential post to Koirala, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba congratulated him, expressing the confidence that the party would grow more effective under his skilled leadership.

Koirala's rival contestants Chiranjibi Wagle and Ram Hari Joshi also congratulated him and pledged their full support and cooperation to the new president.

Four region-based CWC members, Speaker Ram Chandra Poudel, Ministers Bhim Bahadur Tamang and Bijaya Gachhadar, and ex-MP Sushil Koirala also felicitated Koirala and pledged their support.

The NC's ninth general convention which began May 8 concludes tomorrow.

Nepal: Congress Ends Convention, Vows To Regain Majority

BK1205151196 Kathmandu THE KATHMANDU POST in English 12 May 96

[Report by THE KATHMANDU POST reporter — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] KATHMANDU, May 11 - The ninth general convention of the Nepali Congress concluded here today with a mass meeting where newly elected president once again resolved to restore Nepali Congress majority in parliament.

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Addressing the mass meeting, party leaders claimed the democratic exercise before and during the convention had provided the party with a new lease of life.

Party's newly elected president Girija Prasad Koirala said, "The Nepali Congress is in itself a movement, a campaign, a hurricane and a force. Nobody can do anything to this party if we remain united.

"The ninth convention has ended all the differences in the party and we will now move forward unitedly," he said.

Koirala urged party workers to undertake some constructive and developmental work in each of the 205 constituencies in the country. "The party has given an economic programme and I won't let you rest," Koirala said.

Calling upon the opposition CPN (UML) [Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxist-Leninist)] to come to competitive politics, he said politics of terror doesn't help the development process.

"Human rights, and friendship will all should be the basis of our foreign policy," Koirala said.

The outgoing president of the party Krishna Prasad Bhattarai expressed his full support and co-operation to the new president hoping Koirala's tenure would be a successful one.

Minister for communications and Koirala's competitor for the NC presidency Chiranjibi Wagle also expressed his support to Koirala. "The convention has ended all the differences in the party," he said.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba said by exercising democratic norms within the party, NC has proved its democratic credentials.

"Coalition government is a new exercise in our country and we are trying our best to make it successful," he said. "The government will complete its full term."

Criticising the CPN (UML) as "an anarchist party," he said, "They make demands and don't come for talks even when they are invited."

Deuba claimed the government had earned the confidence of the donor countries and therefore aid worth billion was pouring in.

Senior leader of the party Mahendra Narayan Nidhi called on the leadership to direct the workers with the programme.

Former minister Shailaja Acharya said the NC is gaining momentum after the stagnancy caused by the internal bickering.

Former speaker Daman Nath Dhungana congratulated the outgoing president Krishna Prasad Bhattarai for having initiated a democratic exercise in the party.

MP Omkar Shrestha also addressed the mass meeting chaired by NC Kathmandu district chairman Prakash Man Singh.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Returns From 'Extremely Successful' Sweden Visit

BK1105140696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has described her visit to Sweden as extremely successful. She said this in an informal talk with newsmen on board the return flight last night after a three-day visit to Sweden. Ms. Benazir Bhutto said she apprised the Swedish leaders of the grave situation in South Asia, especially on the Kashmir issue, and told them that the situation should be reviewed in the context of the following three important factors: repression in occupied Kashmir and India's attempts to hold elections there; India's nuclear and missile programs; and elections in India, where extremists can gain an upper hand.

About the success in boosting economic ties with Sweden, the prime minister said agreements and memoranda of understanding to the tune of more than $600 have been signed. It will be the first time that electric fans manufactured in Pakistan will be supplied through Sweden to all European Union countries. On her meetings with Pakistanis living in Sweden, Denmark, and other neighboring countries, she said she is very impressed by their spirit to work for the nation's welfare. She said that during her visit to Sweden, she exposed the propaganda on the killing of Iqbal Masih. She said the 19-year old Iqbal Masih was not connected with any industry and was killed merely because personal enmity. The nongovernmental organization, which launched this propaganda, has offered a $100,000 bribe to eyewitnesses in this case.

Turning to home affairs, she said with the cooperation of opposition parties, her government wants to deal with various issues, including the restoration of women's seats in Parliament, the abrogation of the eighth amendment to the constitution, and the possible increase of National Assembly membership. The opposition has not responded to the government's offer of talks so far. However, the prime minister welcomed opposition leader Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's statements on national issues made during his visit to China. On the law and order situation in Punjab, she said there are reliable reports that India was involved in the recent bomb blasts

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to divert the attention of the people from the deteriorating situation in occupied Kashmir. In response to a query on the leader of the Altaf Group, she said Pakistan has certain differences with the United Kingdom on Altaf Hussain's activities. However, she expressed the hope that these differences will not affect ties between the two countries.

Radio Pakistan's special representative, Bakhshish Ahmad, reports that the prime minister's aircraft could not land in the federal capital due to bad weather and was diverted to Peshawar, from where the prime minister traveled by road to Islamabad.

Pakistan: Swedish Daily Interviews Bhutto

BK1105144796 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 11 May 96 p 1

[APP Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] STOCKHOLM: In an interview to a Swedish newspaper, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto says she would not want her children to become politicians. She thinks that the opposition's behaviour towards her is "very rude." Benazir also feels that being a woman deprives her of the opportunity of indulging in outdoor sports like hunting.

The interview was conducted by Lena Mellin of a leading Swedish newspaper, the AFTONBLADET.

Q: The British newspaper, THE TIMES, will today nominate you to be the most powerful woman in the world. What advantages and disadvantages are there for a woman leading a Muslim country?

A: I really do not feel the most powerful. I am leading a coalition government. There are disadvantages of being a woman in my position, it causes more wrath than if I had been a man. The opposition can be very rude. The venom that comes from them would not be there if I had been a man.

The advantages include that I receive a more formal treatment, I am shown more respect. But it is a disadvantage that I cannot join in male activities such as partridge and duck hunting, where you solve problems by the fireplace afterwards.

Q: Would you want your daughters to become politicians, too?

A: No, none of my children. But I want them to study law like myself and my father. It teaches you how to argue! And I hope they want to commit themselves to social work. But I will not stop them if they want to become politicians themselves. My father, on the other hand, wanted me to enter politics. So that he could be as proud of me as Nehru was of Indira (Gandhi).

Q: Your father was prime minister, too. What has he meant to you?

A: His influence on me was enormous. According to him, there was nothing I could not do, as long as I did my best. When his government was overthrown and he was executed and stolen from us, I decided I had to take up his work. That was how I became engaged in politics.

Q: You were educated in US and Great Britain. Who do you feel most close to, women in the west or those in your own country?

A: To women who like myself have a western education and who live in cities. But that group is not so large in Pakistan.

Pakistan: President Leaves for Turkmenistan via Iran

BK1205113196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farroq Ahmad Khan Leghari left Islamabad this afternoon for Mashhad, in Iran, on his way to Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan, to represent Pakistan at the fourth ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] summit. The two-day summit opens on Tuesday [14 May]. At Mashhad, the president will attend the inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway line tomorrow, linking Iran with Central Asia. President Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan is due to call on President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari at Mashhad today, which will be followed by a similar call by President Shevardnadze of Georgia.

President Leghari is accompanied by minister for petroleum and natural resources, Mr. Anwar Saifullah Khan. The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, who is already in Ashgabat, to attend the ECO ministerial meeting, will join the president's entourage there.

Pakistan: President Meets Iranian, Kazakh Counterparts

BK1305055996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari has had talks with the presidents of Iran and Kazakhstan in Mashhad on Kashmir dispute and Afghanistan question. Soon after his arrival in Mashhad, the president held a meeting with his Iranian counterpart, Mr. 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani. The Kashmir issue and the Afghan crisis figured prominently at their talks. The two leaders had identical views on the Afghan

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issue and they expressed their desire for bringing a lasting peace in Afghanistan on the basis of an acceptable leadership for all Afghan groups.

President Leghari briefed the Iranian president on the situation prevailing in occupied Kashmir in the wake of Indian efforts to stage farcical elections in the held territory to deprive the Kashmiri people of their right to self-determination.

The president also held talks with President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan and exchanged views with him for promoting the existing economic cooperation between the two countries. The Kazakh president was also briefed on the situation in occupied Kashmir. Radio Pakistan's special representative Mahmud Hussain reports from Mashhad that the two leaders also discussed matters relating to the fourth ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] summit beginning in Ashgabat tomorrow. President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari also visited the shrine of Hazrat Imam Raza. Later, President Leghari attended a banquet hosted by the Iranian president in honor of the leaders attending the inauguration of the railway project. The project is being inaugurated today.

Pakistan: Foreign Secretary on Russia Trip, U.S. Arms Supply

BK1205084096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign secretary, Mr. Najmuddin Sheikh, will pay a two-day visit to Moscow from Thursday [16 May]. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad yesterday, he said the visit is part of regular discussions on bilateral level. This, he said, also precedes the expected official visit of the prime minister.

Replying to a question, he said Pakistan backs all efforts of the United Nations to bring peace in Afghanistan.

To a question, the foreign secretary said there is nothing to worry on the U.S. front in the wake of ring magnet issue. The release of arms to Pakistan under the Brown Amendment will continue. He said talks on the repayment of money Pakistan deposited for F-16's will keep on going.

Pakistan: UN Envoy Arrives in Islamabad

LD1105163696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Pashto 1230 GMT 11 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The special envoy of the UN secretary general [Mahmoud Mestiri] returned to Islamabad on Friday [10 May].

During his three-day visit to Kabul, Mestiri held talks with Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani; Najibollah Lafra'i, acting minister of foreign affairs; and Dr. 'Abdorrahman, minister of civil aviation.

During the meeting between Rabbani and Mestiri talks were held on the results of Mestiri's discussion with General Dostam, leader of the National Islamic Movement in northern Afghanistan.

Despite his six rounds of missions, Mestiri has not yet achieved any success.

Pakistan: President of Azad Jammu, Kashmir Resigns

BK1305023496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 13 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan, the president of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has resigned. He submitted his resignation after the meeting of the Muslim Conference parliamentary party in Muzaffarabad last night. Abdur Rashid Abbasi, the speaker of the Azad Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, will perform the duties of the president. Sardar Sikander Hayat Khan has said he will address a news conference today to inform journalists about his resignation.

Pakistan: Minister on Possible Terrorist Acts in Islamabad

BK1205161996 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Interior Minister Major General, retired, Nasirullah Khan Babar has said that the government is taking the necessary steps to check the activities of terrorists in different parts of the country, particularly in Islamabad. He was speaking on a call-attention notice by Chaudhry Mohammad Zafar Iqabal, Mohammad Zafarullah Khan, Rana Zahid Tausif, Chaudhry Mohammad Bajir Tahir, and Sardar Shuja Muhammad Khan in the National Assembly today regarding warnings by secret agencies of the possibility of terrorism in Islamabad at the end of May. The interior minister said that periodically we receive such reports and we take the necessary steps to counter such acts. He added that the authorities have set up check-posts in Islamabad and vehicles are being inspected regularly. He said when reports are received from secret agencies with threats to certain personalities, those personalities are duly informed and security is increased for them.

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Pakistan: 'Stalemate' Continues as Kabul Cannot Pay for New Embassy

BK1105144596 Islamabad THE NATION in English 11 May 96 p 1

[Report by Fahd Husain]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD — Kabul may have agreed in principle to pay compensation to Pakistan for the damage to its embassy last year, but Rabbani has expressed his inability to produce cold cash.

"He says he is willing to reconstruct the embassy but cannot pay cash," a senior official told THE NATION. According to him, Kabul is peddling the argument that it is short of cash and therefore is not in a position to fulfill Pakistan's demand of $15 million as compensation for human and material losses as a result of the attack on the embassy in September last year.

However, Pakistan is not ready to let Kabul reconstruct the damaged embassy premises. "Which country in the world allows the host country to be responsible for the construction of its embassy building," argues a concerned official. After all, an embassy building and the land it occupies is the property not of the host but the guest country and the host has no jurisdiction over it. No mission can afford to let the host-however friendly it might be-be privy to the premises. In case of Pakistan and Afghanistan, this is the first argument.

The second is that the destroyed premises had originally been built by the British for the use of their mission and Islamabad doubts that Kabul can reconstruct the structure in its original classical style. As it is, the old artisans with the necessary skills for such construction are now a dying breed, and the chance of their being in Kabul are razor thin.

In essence then, the stalemate between Islamabad and Kabul continues as far as opening of Pakistan's mission in Kabul is concerned. Pakistan's ambassador to Afghanistan Qazi Humayun has also been nominated as envoy to Singapore (though this has officially not been announced) and his replacement is still being considered.

One of the candidates is Tariq Osman Haider who is presently serving as ambassador in Turkmenistan. He had accompanied Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ali to Afghanistan in August last year and had sit in on all meetings and negotiations. However, nothing is final as yet. Islamabad is in no hurry because the re-opening of the mission in Kabul is still some time away.

The Afghan delegation which had visited Islamabad last week was conveyed Pakistan's hesitancy to replace the demand for cash compensation with the offer of reconstruction, and Kabul is now supposed to get back with an answer. The possibility of a Pakistani delegation visiting Kabul will only arise after the answer from Kabul.

Electricity however has returned to Kabul ever since the coming on board of Golbadin Hekmatyar. He had cut off the supply outside Kabul when he was at war with Rabbani. But some reports suggest that Ahmad Shah Mas'ud has told Hekmatyar that in order to prove his loyalty to Rabbani, he should attack the Taleban.

Hekmatyar is said to have expressed confidence that he will be able to drive them out of Paktia but Pakistani officials believe this is easier said than done.

Pakistan: Editorial Claims U.S. Official's Visit Improved Afghan Ties

BK1105151396 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 11 May 96 p 6

[Editorial: "Ready To Talk Business?"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Renewed American interest in the internal stability of Afghanistan has helped move things in the right direction. One immediate result was steps by Afghanistan and Pakistan to "unfreeze" relations. The diplomatic relations between the two countries practically had come to a halt following the attack on Pakistani embassy in Kabul and a less than friendly attitude of the Rabbani government in its response to the dastardly incident last September. In that incident, the Pakistani Mission building was put to torch and the staff, including the ambassador, physically assaulted. Since then, Pakistan embassy in Kabul has remained virtually closed and diplomatic relations were at their lowest ebb.

No doubt that the Rabbani government had its complaints against Pakistan but the attack on embassy and severe beating of its diplomats were a serious matter and must have been tackled by Kabul with utmost care and sense of urgency. That was found lacking and a worsening of relations ensued. Pakistan too had its disappointments, particularly about the increasing influence of the Indians which was the direct result of active support from the Rabbani government. The diplomatic tiff that developed following the embassy episode continued without either side attempting to engage in meaningful discussions to resolve the matter.

It was, therefore, most welcome news that the two governments held their first face-to-face meeting in eight months. The Afghan delegation led by its transport minister had a detailed discussion with the Pakistani side headed by its Foreign Minister on Tuesday in Islamabad.

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The development was described as a major diplomatic breakthrough. The Afghan delegation which had arrived on an invitation from Pakistan held one session of talks with the Pakistanis. While they were still here, a Pakistan Foreign Office official was reported to have told newspapers that Islamabad's stand that Kabul apologise and pay compensation for burning of its embassy was vindicated when the Afghan delegation agreed "in principle" to accept Pakistan's demands. The Pakistani official pointed out that it was for the first time that Kabul made an official acknowledgement and accepted Pakistan's conditions for resumption of full-fledged diplomatic relations. The Afghan government was said to have further agreed to provide temporary accommodation for Pakistani Mission in Kabul. That indicates the eagerness of both sides to restart full diplomatic activity as early as possible.

The thaw in Pak-Afghan relations followed visit to the two countries by the US diplomat Robin Raphael last month. She held detailed discussion in Islamabad and Kabul on the need to bring internal peace and stability to the strife torn country and remove impediments to the economic development of Afghanistan and Central Asia. Immediately following her Kabul visit the Afghan Foreign Minister Najibollah Lafra'i told newsmen that relations between Pakistan and his country were showing definite signs of improvement and that the representatives of the two sides may meet during the ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization] regional economic cooperation group meeting in May in Ashkabad. The Islamabad visit of the Afghan delegation ahead of the ECO meeting, therefore, indicates that the process of improving bilateral relations was getting priority attention of the two governments and progress has been more than expected. A significant point to note is that the Afghan delegation which held talks in Islamabad on Tuesday was led by Transport Minister Abdul Ghafar Saim. The visit also symbolises the willingness of the two sides to talk business.

Transport is the major sector where projects of high economic value and strategic importance are the focus of attention not only in Pakistan and Afghanistan but the Central Asian states too have big stakes there. The talks on Tuesday included discussions on building of roads in Afghanistan and laying of gas and oil pipelines from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Afghanistan. The pipelines can link Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan is trying to hammer out an agreement with the Central Asian states. Since the route is through Afghanistan, revival of better relations between the two countries prior to the ECO summit was important for both Afghanistan and Pakistan. The talks on Tuesday also brightened the prospects of a one-to-one meeting between President Farooq Leghari and President Borhanoddin Rabbani in Ashkabad early next week. They can hopefully agree on an increased level of cooperation, particularly in the transport sector which is the top priority area for an accelerated economic development effort in the whole region.

Pakistan: Opposition Party Protests Against Russian Chechnya Policy

BK1105153196 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 11 May 96 p 12

[Report by Saeed Ahmed]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] RAWALPINDI: The workers and leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami [JI] Friday observed a black day against the Russian atrocities on Chechens. The day was observed on the call of JI president Qazi Hussain Ahmed.

Like other parts of the country, the JI activists expressed solidarity with their Chechen brethren by organising public meeting, seminars, rallies and protest demonstrations in many parts of Rawalpindi.

The main demonstration was held at Committee Chowk, Murree Road, under the supervision of Maulana Abdul Jalil, Amir JI Rawalpindi. The protesters, hundreds in munber, were carrying banners and placards denouncing violence on the Chechens. They beat their chests and demanded immediate withdrawal of the Russian forces.

When the demonstrators reached the offices of THE NEWS and DAILY JANG, they raised anti-Russia slogans and blocked Murree Road for quite sometime. However, on reaching Secretariat No 2, they dispersed of peacefully. The local police throughout their protest remained with them to avert any untoward incident.

Later, a delegation comprised JI parliamentary leader Muzaffar Hashmi; ex-MPA Dr Mohammad Afzal Aizaz, Amir JI district Islamabad Gul Andaz Abbasi, Naib Amir Major Tariq Mahmood Khan, Maulana Abdul Jalil and Arshad Farooq, handed over a protest memorandum to the Russian Embassy calling upon them to end genocide on the innocent Chechens.

Meanwhile, ulemas [religious scholars] in their Friday sermons condemned the Russian forces for their violence on Chechens and criticised the dual standards of the United Nations, US and the western powers.

They appealed to the Islamic countries, especially to the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC), to take serious notice of the Russian barbarism and raise their voice at the International level.

They also demanded of the Pakistan Government to realise its responsibilities and extend its fullest support

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and help the oppressed people of Chechnya. Several resolutions were also passed on the occasion.

Pakistan: Punjab Minister Details Measures To Combat Terrorism

BK1105160596 Islamabad PAKISTAN TIMES in English 11 May 96 pp 1,9

[PPI Report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] SARGODHA, May 10: Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Muhammad Arif Nakai has stated that the government has undertaken highly effective and strict measures for banishing the evil of terrorism and to improve the law and order situation in the province so that the common man could lead peaceful life with complete sense of security.

He was presiding over the meeting of all the DCs [Deputy Commissioners] and superintendents of police of Sargodha Division at the local Circuit House here today which was attended by Provincial Minister Farrukh Javaid Ghumman, Ikram Rabbani, MPA [Member of Provincial Assembly] Mazhar Qureshi, Mehr Ghulam Dastgir Lak, Commissioner Sargodha Division, Syed Tajammul Abbas and DIG [Deputy Inspector General] Police Mr. Arshad Saeed.

The Chief Minister said that no efforts will be spared to apprehend the terrorists involved in the recent bomb explosions and awarding them exemplary punishment. He said elected government which could ensure rule of law, social peace and security could genuinely claim to be popular among the masses. He said with a view to ensuring religious harmony and sectarian peace he was personally meeting with the Ulema [religious scholar] of various schools of thought at the divisional level. He urged the patriotic religious leaders to fully cooperate with the government for maintaining complete understanding and an atmosphere of brotherhood among the Muslims of various schools of thought during the forthcoming holy month of Muharram.

The Chief Minister stressed upon administration and police officers that they should not spare any suspect figure in the city and villages falling in their jurisdiction and should fully investigate his antecedents. He said government would deal with the thieves law breakers, cattle lifters and their patrons with iron hands.

Lauding the past practice during police investigation the chief minister warmed that the SHO [Station House Officer] who would not acquire the services of 'Khoji's' would be thrown out of the service.

He asked the deputy commissioners that they should come out of their offices and undertake frequent tows of far flung areas so that aggrieved persons could easily contact them for the speedy solution of their day to day problems. He said before the partition the British DCs used to visit such remote areas on horses backs which our district officers do not take the pain of visiting there even in their cars. He said the ACs and DCs during their visits should particularly check the revenue record as it could bring an end to 80 per cent of existing litigation pertaining to revenue matters. He said he would also personally check the tour details of the district officers during his visit to various districts and divisional headquarters. He said he had already issued directions that no AC and DC who had not undergone training in revenue matters should be posted in the field in future.

Pakistan: Minister Pledges No Increase in Prices, Inflation

BK1105154696 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 11 May 96 p 1

[Report by Kosar Naqvi]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ABBOTTABAD: Federal Minister for Commerce and Industry Chaudhury Ahmad Mukhtar has ruled out any chance of increase in prices of items of daily use in the next budget.

"Due to some drastic steps taken by the government, the prices and inflation are coming down," he claimed while speaking at "Meet- the-Press" programme of Abbottabad Press Club on Friday.

He informed that the inflation rate had come down to 9.2 per cent as compared to 13 per cent last year. He hoped it would further slide down to 6 per cent.

Regarding trade treaty with India, Mukhtar said it would not mean compromising on Kashmir issue. He said although India had declared Pakistan the most favoured nation, but they were negotiating with them over it as they had their own priorities. He denied that prices were low in India saying items like ghee [lard], sugar and wheat were costly in that country than Pakistan. "Quality of our products is also superior," he added.

Talking about the current political and law and order situation in Punjab and Sindh, the federal minister said political polarization was gradually decreasing as a result of the understanding reached between the government and the opposition on different issues. "This is the reason that the opposition had stopped demanding removal of the government before the end of its tenure," he explained.

APP adds: Responding to a query regarding the Most Favoured Nation's status to India, he said that being a

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signatory to WTO and GATT, it was mandatory upon the government to extend this facility. However, he maintained that there were certain provided the opportunity for negotiations between the countries having border disputes. He said that to qualify for the Most Favoured Nation status, India would have to liberalise its trade and bring up its duties to the level of Pakistan.

Ch. Ahmed Mukhtar also underlined the need to broaden the tax-base. He regretted that unfortunately in Pakistan, income tax-evasion had become routine and many big business concerns paid a meager amount as income tax. This, he said, necessitated the need to expand the tax base to the common man by imposing sales tax. He further said that 20 per cent essential items were exempted from GST [goods and services tax].

Pakistan: Altaf Group Responsible for 'Partial Strike' in Karachi

BK1205123696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 12 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Karachi, a partial strike is being observed at the call of Altaf Group. Some shopping centers and markets are closed; however, small shops and markets are open in some areas. Transport is plying on roads, though less in numbers. Karachi Transport Corporation has made arrangements to ply all its buses on prescribed routes.

In Hyderabad also, a partial strike is being observed in some areas, but there is no strike in Cantonment area, Qasimabad, Hussainabad, Wahab Colony and adjoining areas.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: President Assures 'Solution in Sight' to Conflict in North

BK1005151096 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 10 May 96

[Report by Pramod de Silva — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A solution to the protracted conflict in the North is "at hand," President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga said yesterday.

"For 12 long years, a so-called war was waged without any solution in sight. Now a solution is in sight. We will have to make certain sacrifices in the interest of security and law and order in the meantime," President Kumaratunga told officials of Vocational Training Councils at their national convention at the BMICH, Colombo.

"We have presented political proposals to solve the vexed problem while fighting one of the most ruthless band of terrorists in the world. The results of our military efforts and additional defence expenses are evident," she added.

She said many foreign investors were at "Lanka's door step" awaiting an improvement in the security scenario. The present security situation has impeded the influx of foreign investment to the country.

This situation would alter dramatically if the war were to end, creating a large number of employment opportunities for youth. Some prominent multi-national companies have already taken the plunge despite security concerns, the president told the gathering.

The president asked whether certain persons who called for a totally military solution would ever send their own sons to the battle front.

"Certain politicians who say there is no security in the country lambast the government for imposing the emergency. I do not know what they mean. We had to take that measure as the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] would do anything to create trouble in other parts of the country while they are subject to intense military pressure in the North."

She assured that the government had formulated a plan to safeguard the City, though one could not rule out certain shortcomings.

The president called for a "radical change of attitude" with regard to the war.

"We should shed the 'who-cares-about-the-war-let's-have-fun' attitude as we are a country at war with a group of ruthless terrorists. Wars are difficult times for any country and we can hardly bear the Rs.[rupees] 39,000 million defence expenditure per year. This also drastically reduces the quantity of funds for development, thereby decreasing employment opportunities."

She recalled that it was the LTTE which reneged on peace talks and chose the war path. The government has a clear plan to solve to the ethnic problem.

She also stressed that the government grants subsidies for a number of products and services despite incurring a huge defence bill.

Sri Lanka: France Affirms Support for Peace With Tamil Rebels

BK1005114996 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] French Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Margie Sudre yesterday called on President Chandrika Kumaratunga at Temple Trees [official residence of prime minister].

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The minister of state is on a three-day official visit to Sri Lanka as a special envoy of French President Jacques Chirac. President Kumaratunga briefed Mrs. Sudre about the present situation in the North and East. She also outlined the government's proposals for resolving the ethnic problem. Housing and Construction Minister Nimal S. de Silva gave a detailed explanation of the rehabilitation program in the liberated areas of the Jaffna peninsula.

The French envoy expressed her government's support and appreciation for President Kumaratunga's peace initiative. She reiterated that France is firmly committed to a peaceful resolution of the ethnic conflict. Mrs. Sudre handed over a special message from the French president to Mrs. Kumaratunga. The message included an invitation to the Sri Lankan president to visit France. The invitation was accepted and arrangements will be finalized in due course.

Sri Lanka: Officer Relates Former Government Links With LTTE

BK1005133296 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 10 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A high-ranking Army officer has given more evidence about the previous regime's arms transactions with the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. (Brigadier Towan Boran) told the Kobbekaduwa Presidential Commission yesterday that he handed over a large consignment of ammunition and arms to the LTTE at a remote jungle location in June 1989. The witness said that he was acting on the orders of the JOC [Joint Operations Command] chief, General Cyril Ranatunge; Army Commander General Hamilton Wanasinghe; and Defense Secretary General Sepala Attygalle.

(Brigadier Boran) is commander of the 12th brigade of the Sri Lanka Army. He said that he has served as the coordinating officer in Weli Oya in 1989. In April that year, he was summoned to Colombo by the defense secretary general, Attygalle. The witness said that he had met Anton Balasingham, Dilip Yogi, and Lawrance Thilakar of the LTTE at a Colombo hotel. He had been instructed not to pay any attention to the terrorist activities in an around Weli Oya. (Brigadier Boran) said another consignment of 300,000 live cartridges, self-loading guns, and T-56 rifles was also handed over to the terrorists two days later. The consignment was delivered in two Army trucks.

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